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[REYNOLD RALEIGH SOUNDS NOEL CALDERWOOD.]

MISS ARLINGCOURT'S WILL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Leaves of Fate," "Octavia's Pride," &c., &c.

CHAPTER VIII.

LUCY grew more charming than ever in the sunny atmosphere of these festive scenes. Every day developed some new talent, some undiscovered grace. Reynold Raleigh found it so, and so did Lieutenant Kirkwood. The young man was as thoroughly in love before the week was out, as if he had known her all his life. The curiosity of the whole party had been aroused, and every endeavour made to discover the source of their amused recognition at the first introduction. But Lucy had laid a finger warningly on her lip, and the young lieutenant was too gallant to dispute her will, even if it had not been his own choice to hold securely the pretty secret.

But the reader shall know how it happened that these young people had made a previous acquaintance. Lucy, it seems, had once received from Miss Arlingcourt the present of a small sum in gold, which she had hoarded for some great occasion, stoutly resisting the temptation to appropriate it for common needs. At last a want came, which satisfied her of its importance. An old, broken-down Frenchman came to rent a room in the street in which was the little apothecary's shop of Noel Calderwood, and he offered to give the girl lessons in his native language for just that little fortune of hers. The girl had dim visions about fitting herself for what seemed to her the most charming of situations, that of a governess, and she was not slow to take advantage of this opportunity.

M. Arnault was a singular old fellow, zealous and enthusiastic in his teaching, but testy and irritable at any provocation. He took a great deal of pains with Lucy, and was very fond of her in his own fashion. He told her when she was about half through her first quarter, that he had obtained another pupil, who would join her in her lessons at

his room. Lucy, then the shy, timid child of the gloomy home over the apothecary's shop, straightway lost courage, and was so overwhelmed with confusion in the presence of the bright-looking, handsome youth, that her verbs and nouns mixed themselves in inextricable confusion. The old Frenchman grew first indignant, then angry, and in the midst of a fierce tirade he discovered that his other pupil was laughing at him; upon which he turned suddenly upon the startled pair, in imitation of the old-time pedagogues' tyranny, and with a bow of ironical politeness, informed them they might wait his leisure, since they had chosen wantonly to waste his valuable time. After which he put on his hat, walked to the door, locking it behind him, and coolly putting the key in his pocket, went off down the street, leaving his pupils locked in together.

The situation was too ridiculous to allow any farther reserve. Rolf fell to laughing at the top of his voice. Lucy claimed in the silvery chorus. And then straightway her shyness fell away, and when the irate old teacher returned, he found them talking as familiarly as brother and sister. After that they met some half-a-dozen times at the Frenchman's room. And it was not to be wondered at that Lieutenant Kirkwood was more than delighted to find that this elegant heiress at Arlingcourt Rise was the same little Lucy who had charmed his boyish fancy as the old Frenchman's pupil.

They were halcyon days which followed for these two young creatures. Neither had a thought beyond the delicious consciousness that the world was as beautiful as a fairy dream, and life and youth a draught of tender joy, so fine and ethereal as almost to be a blissful pain. They hardly at first realised how it was that to each, the other's presence gave sunshine and gladness to all surrounding objects. They scarcely perceived how certain they were to drift out of the general current, and by themselves, enjoy a beautiful view, a moonlight stroll, a gay up-land canter.

But others were not so blind. Miss West's faded eyes emitted a gleam of tigerish joy. She welcomed the forging of the steel which was to strike into Rey-

nold Raleigh's heart the pang he had so mercilessly inflicted upon others.

Mr. Raleigh, himself, while he relaxed none of his genial urbanity and cheerfulness before his guests, was inwardly fuming with jealous rage. He thought it a good move, when Noel Calderwood came, to set his fatherly or selfish anxiety on the alert.

"By the way, Calderwood," said he, assuming the utmost nonchalance, "I am not so sure but my income will be doubled next year."

"Ah! well, I hope so," replied Noel, carelessly. "Some new management of the dyking I suppose. I heard something about it before."

"Oh, no! A surer venture than that. Don't you understand, man? Stop this evening and watch your fair daughter's looks. I'll wager the will of Miss Arlingcourt will have little weight by the side of the persuasions of a certain gallant lieutenant."

As he expected, the little druggist's face turned fairly purple.

"What do you mean?" stammered he. "Lucy is not, shall not be so absurd, ridiculous, utterly reckless! Who is the fellow?"

"Who, indeed," returned Reynold, with the same unconcerned air. "I don't know anything more than his name. Where is our friend, Guy? He must tell us the rest."

Guy Dalrymple was prompt in his answers:

"He is one of the best fellows in the world, as steady as a clock, with as brave and generous a heart as you could ask. Begging your pardon, sir, but the young lady couldn't do better."

"He has a large fortune, then?" asked Calderwood, sharply.

At which Guy Dalrymple whistled.

"Humph! I don't know how much of a fortune. I know he is well connected, and his father held a high rank in the army at one time."

"He has a father living, then?" interrupted Reynold Raleigh, with a little nervous twitching of his lip.

"Certainly. I should not have brought him here if I had not always known him to be well connected."

"Connections don't always help a man," com-

mented Noel, and then he added, under his breath: "Lucy isn't going to make a fool of herself. I am not a going to allow it."

"I'm glad to know he isn't of that family," muttered Reynold Raleigh.

Guy lifted his eyebrows.

"What family? How curious you two are about the poor fellow."

"It is nothing. I was only saying, I was glad he wasn't one of those Kirkwoods I know once."

"You did? He's very curious to get at a family history. Where did you know a Kirkwood?"

"I didn't know one. I only knew of a man by that name; that is all. Do set those ladies into something better than that endless talk about embroidery patterns."

And then he turned to Noel Calderwood.

"You see I will not take unfair advantage, I give you a hint which way the current is drifting. Miss Lucy is still young, and ought not to choose hastily, even if she must gainsay Miss Arlingcourt's will and choose at all."

"I shall look after her," said the anxious father, with an angry frown.

"Don't ruin matters by being too precipitate," cautioned the judicious co-heir.

And then he decided to take a farther step on his own account.

That evening, to Lieutenant Kirkwood's secret vexation, the host insisted upon taking him out to ride, to look at an evening view of the clustering mills of a neighboring factory village, whose myriad lights looked like a flight of fireflies tangled in the shrubbery surrounding the place.

"Yes, sir, it is very pretty, quite charming," said the young gentleman, trying to put a little animation into his tone, while he was thinking ruefully of the pretty group of merry girls gathering in the drawing-room at Arlingcourt House. "But don't you find the night air rather damp? Ought you not to return to the house?"

"Oh no, indeed! the atmosphere is unusually clear to-night!" returned Mr. Raleigh, drily. "I am enjoying it very much; I think I must take you a mile farther. We have a cheery beacon light from the valley down there, from our windows at Arlingcourt. You shall see how it looks, and fancy the ladies are beaming a welcome from their bright eyes."

The poor lieutenant, with a secret groan, resigned himself to his fate, and tried to be amiably interested.

"We have a cozy party now," observed his host, cracking the whip lightly over his horse's ear.

"A delightful one! I was never more thoroughly pleased with people in my life!" responded the young gentleman.

"And the ladies are unusually intelligent, as well as lovely," pursued Reynold, in a meditative voice. "They are all charming; but I think our dear Lucy bears away the palm. There is a subtle attraction about her which no other young lady of my acquaintance possesses."

"You are right," was the ardent response; "Miss Calderwood is without a peer."

"It seems cruel when I remember how she is cut off from forming the pride and ornament of any other home. But it is not for me to demur. It is our gain, certainly, that she is never to leave the old house."

Lieutenant Kirkwood was thoroughly attentive now.

"Never to leave the old house! How can that be? Do you mean that she must bring her husband there when she marries?"

"She is not to marry at all, my dear fellow. Haven't you heard the conditions of Miss Arlingcourt's will? It would be very cruel to allow a susceptible young gentleman like you to be in her fascinating society, without proper warning on that score. Miss Lucy, if not a flower to blush unseen, is certainly one to bloom unplucked. She can never marry."

"That is preposterous! ridiculous!" exclaimed the young gentleman, angrily; and then recollecting that he must appear very foolish, he added gravely, "It is certainly a very singular provision."

"Yes, a barbarous one. I share it myself and must bear the same penalty. Do you think I should allow my beautiful Lucy to be flattered and admired by all you gay young fellows, if there were an opportunity to take her myself?"

"You—you?" stammered the lieutenant.

"Yes, I. Is my heart callous, because it happens to have seen more than five and twenty years? Have I not the best right; the first claim?"

The tone was growing fierce and bitter, and the lieutenant began to be hot and uncomfortable.

"I did not know—I did not suspect," he stammered, and then paused abruptly.

"But I know the whole, young sir. I tell you if Lucy Calderwood could be any one's wife she would

be mine. But since it cannot be, I am her guardian and friend, and I allow no idle trifling. Take warning in season, and be no moth to singe your wings irreparably against this light, however dazzling it may be."

And having said this, he wheeled the horse and carriage about abruptly, and drove back to the house at a furious rate.

Not another word was spoken. Lieutenant Kirkwood walked slowly up the steps and went in at the side door. He was no longer impatient to reach the drawing-room. He felt like a dreamer who left the stars shining, and wakens to find a black cloud lowering all around him. Or a fever patient, who went into delirium with the blue sky of June, and the delicious breath of roses around him, but, rousing, finds the snow shrouding all things, and naked boughs waving in wintry winds.

"My wings are singed now," quoth he, ruefully.

CHAPTER IX.

LUCY, in the drawing-room, meanwhile watched the sounds from the avenue notwithstanding all the chattering round her. She knew the moment the wheels of the light phaeton crunched upon the gravel, the unconscious colour rose in her cheeks, and her eye sparkled. It had been such a dull evening, she said to herself. She wondered what could be the reason.

And the animated look faded. The step she already knew as well passed on outside, and went in, she supposed, at the other door. Half an hour—an hour; still he did not appear in the drawing-room, although Mr. Raleigh was there, in the most brilliant spirits; and had already sent the whole company into a shout of laughter by a comical story he related.

Lucy, sinking into a vague depression, sat silently watching the door.

At last Lieutenant Kirkwood came; he entered languidly, cast his eyes a moment in Miss Calderwood's direction, and went into the other room to examine a portfolio of engravings. These foolish young creatures! Both believed their part was successfully carried out, and that the appearance of gaiety, assumed to hide an aching heart, obtained full credence with all the company.

"What's happened to the young people?" questioned the shrewd lawyer of young Guy. "A lover's quarrel?"

The latter shrugged his shoulders.

"There's been some meddling of older fingers I reckon. It wasn't for the view of the lighted mills our host so politely took the lieutenant to ride to-night. Poor Kirkwood! He wouldn't look half so forlorn, marching off into battle. I'm for fair play, I'm going to give them a chance for some explanation."

And in a moment after, he had proposed a starlight walk down to the park.

Lucy watched timidly, and when she saw the lieutenant walk listlessly by Miss West, she tossed her head proudly. But the next moment came the thought.

"Perhaps he has heard bad news, and is in trouble; he ought to have a sympathizing word from somebody."

And, forgetting her pride, of which indeed the sweet girl had but an indifferent share, she managed to fall presently into his rear.

Miss West promptly walked off by herself, secretly rejoicing that the young ladies were monopolising Reynold Raleigh's attention.

"I am afraid you are growing homesick Lieutenant Kirkwood," said Lucy in her sweet earnest voice, "You seem sad this evening."

The young gentleman's heart was beating tumultuously. What an angelic creature she was! Singed? He was quite aware that the moth's wings were scorched to a cinder.

"I—I don't know; I have been thinking, I admit, that I ought to take my leave of this place," he stammered, and then added more composedly, "It is natural it should make me sad; I have been in a fairy dream, I think, all the while I have enjoyed so much."

"But you were to stay the whole month! Mr. Dalrymple said you were to remain as long as he. If you enjoy it, why should you go away?" questioned innocent Lucy, with a vibrant chord of dismay in her voice.

The young man looked over to her wistfully, wishing the starlight would give him a clearer view of the ingenuous face.

"Ah, Miss Calderwood," he ventured, "when one wakes from the dream, and knows it is a dream, should he turn back again to delusive visions, however charming? Is not the final waking to dreary reality more trying?"

"I do not understand you," said Lucy with a little healthy indignation in her voice, which in

this dimness was all the guide he had to her emotions. "I do not see what there is delusive here. We are all good friends. We would none of us deceive you. We really like your company, and shall be sorry for you to go."

He sighed heavily; racked his brain for the thing which was proper to say, and shut his lips upon the impetuous reply that longed to be spoken.

"I do not mean to imply anything which can reflect upon anyone here. It is my own fault; I ought not to have come at all; and now it is certainly my duty to return to my regiment."

"But your leave is not up. I really am exceedingly puzzled, I am afraid something unpleasant has occurred. I wish you would tell me. I am confident I can explain it away."

"Oh, Miss Calderwood, if you only could," burst from the young soldier before he had time to put a prudent bar against the words.

"There is something then, I know there was!" she cried triumphantly, "now you have admitted it, you must certainly tell me what it is; I am sure I shall be able to explain it away."

"Oh, if you were only the same little Lucy I used to meet at the old Frenchman's," he sighed.

"Why? But I am; only a great deal happier, and better able to help others and improve myself. You are not any more afraid of me here, I hope!"

"I am afraid of myself—my own happiness, if, indeed, it is not already ruined!" he cried. "Oh, Miss Lucy, you have taught me to love you and—and—to-night I have been told that you can never marry!"

He had spoken it at last; he rose straightway to the emergency, and seemed all at once to have received a double portion of manliness.

"I do not know that I ought to have spoken this; but, since I have determined to take my leave, and you asked an explanation, it seems the only honourable course left me. I must go away, Miss Calderwood, because I cannot remain in your company without loving you with all the strength and devotion of my nature."

Lucy was picking vehemently at the fringe of her India scarf; her brain was all in a whirl; but uppermost was one rapturous joy. He loved her! Rolf Kirkwood loved Lucy Calderwood. A silver voice seemed to be ringing that sentence into her ear, and from below a soft heart-throb echoed back,—"Lucy Calderwood loves Rolf Kirkwood!"

She was silent no long, in the sweet ecstasy of this discovery, that the young man asked sorrowfully:

"Are you offended, Miss Calderwood? Have I been presumptuous in telling you?"

"Offended! oh no! I am only surprised, a little bewildered," she murmured softly; and the tremulous sweetness of her voice had certainly no hint of anger.

"Oh!" said he, bitterly, "it is a cruel thing that I must be cut off from the only thing which can make my life glad and bright; that I must turn away from the one being my heart demands!"

She hesitated a moment, and then said archly, with a child's lovely ingenuousness:

"And who says you must, Lieutenant Kirkwood?"

"Ah, Miss Lucy, do not trifle with me! If you knew what black despair has been in my heart to-night you would be merciful!"

"And so I am merciful," said Lucy, earnestly, "and not angry. You have not asked for anything more."

"Because I have not dared; because I have been told it is hopeless. Oh, surely, you would not lightly kindle this wild hope of mine? Is it possible that there is really such joy—that—that you love me in return?"

"I certainly shall not answer a question put in that fashion, sir."

"Miss Calderwood, I love you with the whole fervour of my nature. To win you for my wife would be the richest crown of my life. But dare I ask you to forfeit this rich inheritance of yours for the sake of a poor soldier?"

"A soldier should be always daring," answered Lucy; and then a moment after she added tenderly, "Oh, Rolf, I have only discovered my own heart to-night."

He caught the little fluttering hands in his.

"My darling! my precious, precious treasure!"

And then followed the lovers' talk—nonsense to other ears, but delicious truth to them; and as they followed on behind the merry guiding voices of the party in advance, it somehow became necessary that the young lieutenant's arm should assist the lady's steps. A pair of glittering eyes from out the dimness marked it well; and Barbara West laughed in her sleeve, and gloated over the coming anguish of the heir of Arlingcourt House.

"But," said the young man, doubtfully, "what will your father say?"

"About what?" asked Lucy, secretly rejoicing that her vassalage to undue authority had ended.

"This will of Miss Arlingcourt's. He said to-night—not your father, but Mr. Raleigh, that if you could marry at all you would be his wife."

"Mr. Raleigh's wife!" echoed Lucy, making a ring of her dimpling red lips. "Oh, how preposterous. Don't tell it to any one, but I have a strange distrust of the man; an instinctive antipathy which I cannot overcome. How dare he say I cannot marry! How dares any one say it?"

"It is about this will of Miss Arlingcourt's, I suppose. I heard a few allusions to it from Dalrymple."

"Ah," said Lucy, catching her breath sharply. "I had forgotten all about it. Indeed, I never comprehended its exact meaning. I have been such a gay and careless child since I came to Arlingcourt. I see now, if I marry I must give it all up. I must be poor again."

The voice, slow, a little husky, with a thrill of pain in it, told the new thoughts surging in upon her mind. The young lieutenant listened in an agony of suspense.

"Well?" said he, presently.

"Why, Rolf, are you not worth a dozen fortunes? How could I hesitate, since the mischief is already done? I love you, Rolf! I cannot alter it."

Sweet innocent Lucy. She scarcely understood the rapturous gratitude with which Rolf Kirkwood clasped her to his heart.

"Indeed, indeed you shall not repent it!" he said, earnestly. "I shall be another man now, and keep myself prudent and steady. I will write to my father too, and learn something more definite about my prospects. I think indeed he has assured me that I am likely to be comfortable."

"Oh, I am not afraid! I am a shrewd little manager you know; though the last year has rather unsettled my economical habits. There is only one thing—that dreadful regiment, Rolf! It is very fine to have a soldier lover—but a husband—Dear, dear Rolf, I think you must find something better than that!"

"Anything, my precious one! And you give me authority then to write to my father and tell him you have consented to marry me?"

"I suppose I do—but what is the need of so much hurry?"

"Only that I wish a clear statement of my expectations, with which to meet your father or Mr. Raleigh. I hope Mr. Calderwood will not be very angry."

"I shall tell him myself. I suppose he will be sorry. I wonder if I ought to give up my rights here at once! Dear me! my mind is all confusion."

"And mine all delight! I came out so wretched! In such deep melancholy. I did not dream such a beautiful star would be willing to come down from its high place to warm and brighten me."

"And I am happier too," responded Lucy.

"And will never regret relinquishing this stately home?"

"Never!" answered Lucy.

"What a solemn answer! Never—what?" cried a gay voice.

And then there was a chorus of merry laughter, and the pair found they had stumbled into a circle waiting like a trap—a circle of upright silent figures they had taken for trees or posts.

The lieutenant came gallantly to the rescue of his companion's confusion, and rattled off a score of comical questions to which that earnest "never" was attributed as the reply.

Mingling in one group, the company returned to the house. Gay Guy Dalrymple plucked the lieutenant's sleeve slyly:

"I say, Kirkwood, you recovered your spirits in that walk through the park as completely as if you had touched the 'blarney stone.' You owe me a good turn; you understand."

But Reynold Raleigh glowered angrily, and shut his hands with so fierce a clench, that the nails pierced the skin. For he had read on Lucy's happy young face a story which roused all the slumbering demon in his nature. As they separated for the night he touched her arm.

"If you can spare me a moment, I wish to speak with you in the morning, at nine, in the library."

She bowed a silent consent.

CHAPTER X.

SOMETHING like a mile away from Arlingcourt Rise, between it and the Elm cottage farm, where poor old Silas and the almost broken-hearted Belinda had taken refuge, and hardly a stone's throw from the rear gateway of Peleg Moss, there was a cosy little farmhouse, known in the vicinity as "Mosses' triangle," from the fact that the tiny farm

was of irregular shape, and lay in the tongue of the fork of three intersecting roads.

At this place there was a great commotion on the very morning of the day which had closed so auspiciously for Lieutenant Kirkwood. The dear little children, who had gone to their beds while yet the red sunset was in the sky, were up betimes, and while the cook was crowing lustily, were pattering downstairs, and around the house.

"Let's go down to the barn and see what Mooly is crying for," said Johnny, and Katy nodded acquiescence.

"Oh, and maybe the old goose is off the nest and we can see how many eggs there are," suggested Katy, seizing her straw bonnet, and thrusting it upon her head, as she rushed after the youngster, who went leaping out of the door.

"Wait, Johnny, wait!" she called.

But he flung back a triumphant look, scrambled on, and reaching the door, which was cut in halves horizontally, pulled it open and took a few steps within. He retreated, however, in as much haste as he had advanced, and came tumbling over little Katy, his brown face crimson with sudden fright, and his eyes like two saucers.

"Oh, Katy, run and call daddy. There's a strange body in with the cows."

The farmer was just coming to the door, giving his men the day's directions for the farm work, while he thrust his arms into his Sunday coat; for, as soon as he had taken his breakfast, he was to set off to the fair with a colt, which was sure to win the county prize.

He put on his hat as his daughter screamed out: "Oh, daddy, come to Mooly's stall! Johnny has seen a sight. Come, daddy!"

Johnny by this time was near enough to tell his own story.

Grasping a hand of each, the farmer hurried out to the barn, and leaning on the low door, looked in upon a singular sight.

There, amidst the litter of straw and vegetables thrown into the place, with the hen and her chickens, poor old Mooly and her unruly calf, was a wretched, haggard woman, and a child four or five years old.

"O, gude sir, dinna be angry!" cried the stranger. She was trembling from head to foot, and turned her white face beseechingly towards him.

"Dinna be angry. I came among the beasts to have a roof over the poor bairn's head. I have done little harm, and ta'en but the drop of milk the bairn needed."

"Where do you come from?" asked the farmer, kindly.

"From far away; a sweet ye manna see I am a poor Scotswoman. Much trouble has bid me gang away from my father's house. Oh, for the sake of your own bairns hae pity upon this poor innocent!"

"Come out from this poor place," said the sympathetic farmer; "come into the house and have some of our breakfast, and then we will hear your story."

The poor creature caught her child from the rude floor, hugged it closely to her breast, and came out sobbing her thanks.

"How came you to think of the cow-shed? Why didn't you knock at the door of the house?" asked the farmer, as he led the way to the kitchen-door.

"Would the likes of a poor body like me disturb honest people in their beds? Alack! dinna ye think me so bold as that. It was thankful enough was I to find a place by the beasts. And yet it is nae my desert, but my wrong, my foul wrong!"

And the dark eyes glared angrily backward a moment, and then softened over with a film of tears, as the compassionate mistress brought a chair to the door, and took the child, which was staring around with wild bewildered eyes, into her arms.

"Poor little lamb! only see how thin its arms are! and see it stretch its hands out for bread. Dear, dear! Johnny—Katy, bring some meat and bread, and feed the poor little man. And you too, ma'am. I'm sure by your looks you are nearly famished. Come up to the table; don't wait for our folks. Will you have some coffee or tea?"

"Hech! to think some are so kind and others are so bitter hard. Heaven bless you guid-wife," sighed the wretched-looking woman.

"She is no common tramp," said the farmer to his wife; "and I'm thinking she must have been handsome, too, before her youth went. Poor thing! I mistrust it is trouble, and not years, that have made her look old."

"And her clothes are neat and whole, notwithstanding the dust and stain of travelling. And the poor little boy is a handsome little creature," returned the wife. "Do you suppose she has come all the way from Scotland?"

"There is no doubt of it. Get her story out of her; and I'd keep her to-night if she wants to stay. Now I must have my breakfast and be off to the fair."

"Dear, dear!" said the farmer's wife, "I wonder the child is alive. I hope you haven't much farther to go. Where did you say you were going?"

"I hae nae my own mind yet," replied the woman, evasively. "I maun wait the leadin' o' Providence. But it would be a welcome rest, sae I could find a workin' place. I hae been well used to the kine, an would be faithful, for the bairn's board and mine, ye ken. There be gentry in these parts; is there naught I can do?"

"You may stay here a little. We are busy now, and need another hand at the dairy. The child can play with my little ones. I think you would do nicely," returned the benevolent woman, looking kindly back to the woman's eager glance.

"Heaven maun bless you for your goodness to the fatherless bairn, and a pair forsaken body like his mother," cried the woman. "An' ye shall ne'er repent. I will work the flesh fra' my fingers first."

"Did you expect to find friends in England?" questioned the mistress again, when they were both at work shelling beans.

The woman, who had given her name as Madge Ramsay, looked up and repeated the word drearily.

"Friends! heaven hae mercy! Nae, nae! I hae no friends to be fasht for me. It is only the little laddie I hae."

"But why did you come so far?" persisted the farmer's wife, intensely curious to know the story she was well aware must be behind.

The woman looked her hands together, and stared out of the windows as if she were giving her answer there.

"Did you expect to find work?"

She started; a cold deadly smile crossed her lips.

"Aye, I hae work to find! I hae my work to do, and it is nae friend, but an enemy, I maun find."

The wild glitter of her eyes frightened away any farther attempt at obtaining the strange creature's history.

She performed her work satisfactorily, and would not take rest when urged. The child, likewise, was quiet and contented, and gave no trouble, and when the day was ended, Mrs. Moss was quite confirmed in her intention of keeping the stranger.

The next day Madge went out with the cows, driving them along the road to the upland pasture, and the children accompanied her. She paused at the rise of ground, and looked around searchingly. Her eyes flashed brightly as they looked upon the tall turrets of the great mansion at Arlingcourt Rise, and, stretching out her hand towards it, she asked Katy:

"Yon great hall belongs to gentry. Ye hae some knowledge of it. Tell me who hides there?"

"The people who live there do you mean?" asked Katy, who was not quite sure of the meaning of her words.

"Yes, the people, who are they?"

"It was Miss Arlingcourt's once. Oh! she was such a nice, beautiful lady! But she died, you know, and they buried her under the church. It was such a grand funeral, and the horses had black feathers at their heads."

"But the people who are there now?"

"Oh, yes! there is Miss West. She frightens me, she is so fierce; and the pretty lady with blue eyes. She rides on a white horse, and stopped here one day for a glass of milk. I wish she would come again; she gave me a whole paper of sweetmeats."

"And there are no gentlemen—" was the artful assertion.

"Yes, there are. There's the butler, and the gardener—and—"

"Who's master? Hae they no master?"

"Oh! you mean, Mr. Raleigh. He's nice too. I think. He tossed me a handful of pennies when I opened our gate one day."

She repeated the name slowly, and with a puzzled air.

"Raleigh!—Raleigh! and is Raleigh the master there! There must be another."

"No, there's no other."

"No Reynold, no Mr. Reynold? think again bairn?"

Katy shook her head in positive conviction.

"I never heard of any, and daddy knows 'em all."

Madge Ramsay walked on slowly, with her head hanging down.

"Wae is me if I've come the wrong track," she muttered.

They left the cows plunging eagerly into the sweet warm grass, with the dew yet asparkle on the hillocks, and came back leisurely, the children passing to pick flowers and berries. Madge's boy, the youngest of the party, left off first, and his mother took him up, and tossed him to her shoulders, crooning an old border ballad.

Presently they heard rolling wheels, and the quick tread of a spirited horse.

"There's Mr. Raleigh now!" cried Katy.

The woman turned round with a startled glance.

and went hurriedly into a copse of hazel, on pretence of hunting for nuts. But from out the leafy screen her fierce, wild eyes peered with an interest which grew to intense excitement, as the glittering vehicle and its gentleman driver came abreast of her.

Mr. Raleigh was in a pre-occupied mood, and evidently not in the best of humours; for his forehead was knit savagely, and he gave now and then a vicious cut of the whip upon the animal's glossy flanks.

If he had only seen that pair of flaming eyes glaring out upon him! He dashed on swiftly, unseeing, although not unseen, and in a moment was lost to sight in the turn of the road.

Madge Ramsay came out after awhile, and gave the children a handful of nuts apiece, before she asked of Katy.

"And you was your Mr. Raleigh, the master of the great house ayont?"

"Yes, that was Mr. Raleigh. Ain't he a grand gentleman?"

"Aye! with the devil's heart under fine feathers," muttered Madge, and she walked the rest of the way with a grave, strange manner, that puzzled and half frightened the children.

When they arrived at the farm-house they found Peleg Moss waiting for them.

His old housekeeper was ill in bed, and he had come over to neighbour More's for advice, upon which she had exclaimed triumphantly:

"It's just a streak of luck for you, Peleg! Here's a young, smart woman come to our house, and we were going to keep her; but we'll give her up to you, for the sake of old neighbourly feeling. She'll be just what you want. It's true we ain't of long acquaintance; but what then! you can tell a bad egg by the looks; and though she's forlorn enough, she's honest, and will be faithful. And you won't mind the child. You were always fond of youngsters, Peleg. It's just the thing for you, and for her, too. She'll take good care of old Elspeth, and it's my opinion you won't want to part with her, after you've tried her."

"I can tell when I get a look at her. What brought her in these parts?"

"Saints alive! how do I know? She isn't one of your chattering women. It's plain to me the poor thing has seen sore trouble. When she gets better acquainted perhaps she'll tell us all about it. If she lets you know, do you come and tell me, Peleg Moss, for I don't mind owning I am anxious to hear. Here they come!"

"Is that her boy?—he's a fine little chap! He has a familiar look somehow. He doesn't look like a Scotsman."

"Come hither, Madge," said Mrs. More. "This good man has need of you at his house, and wants you to go with him. What do you say?"

"How far does he live?" asked Madge, eyeing Peleg, sharply.

"Only down the glen there. Don't you see the ivy wall? He is sexton of the church."

"I will go," said Madge.

And so the Scotswoman and her boy became inmates of the sexton's cottage.

(To be continued.)

PARENTS neglecting their children are now liable to six months' imprisonment, and a husband not maintaining his wife can now be sent to prison by two justices. The demand for a poor-rate may be made on the premises, although the parties do not reside on the premises or in the parish.

BAPTIZING FOUNDLINGS IN THE NEVA.—The Russians have a strange practice of baptizing the infants that are left at their foundling hospitals. The ice of the Neva is broken, and the Archbishop of St. Petersburg performs the ceremony. Sometimes the child slips out of the hands of the archbishop, and is carried down the stream. "Heaven has taken this child, hand me another," is the reply.

THE cricket-match between the All England Eleven and the Twenty-five of New York was won easily by the former, who made 175 in one innings, whilst the New Yorkites only made 149 in their two innings. The English Eleven have proceeded to Montreal, where they achieved an easy victory over twenty-two Canadians, who only scored 28, against 310 of the English eleven.

WHALES AND ICEBERGS IN THE ATLANTIC.—Captain Jones, of the ship *Gorilla*, which arrived at Liverpool from St. John, N.B., states that on Sunday, September 6th, he encountered a revolving storm in lat. 24, N., long. 52, W. At four a.m., the wind increased to a gale from S.E., the barometer falling rapidly. At eight o'clock the *Gorilla* was hove-to on the starboard tack, with the wind hauling more to the south. At ten o'clock a fearful storm broke out, and the wind veered gradually to the south-west,

with a tremendous sea on. At half-past eleven the storm continued, and the barometer stood at 28.5. At noon the wind lulled for half an hour, when it changed at once to W.N.W., and blew fearfully for three hours, after which the barometer rose rapidly. During this period the sea swept constantly over the deck, and carried away the deck load. Captain Jones also states that the storm appeared to be travelling E.N.E. at the rate of twenty miles per hour. As he approached Cape Clear the barometer fell from 30.1001 to 28.005. The *Gorilla* passed several large icebergs, two of which were about 400 yards long and 100ft. high. In the neighbourhood of the icebergs there was an immense number of whales. About one hundred miles west of Cape Clear the *Gorilla* passed through a large quantity of deal timber, which appeared to have not been long in the water. On the 29th ult. the *Gorilla* experienced a fresh north and north-west quarter gale, with a very heavy swell, the barometer falling from 29.009 to 28.006. This abstract from Captain Jones's log is most interesting, so far as it testifies to the fact that icebergs and whales have been seen south this year so soon in the season.

TASTES OF FAMOUS MEN.

THE Latin poet Martial, who died in the year 105 of our era, had a special taste for the thrush and the hare. The Emperor Alexander Severus was so fond of rabbits that, according to his biographer, Lampridius, he ate one at every meal. Frederick, Emperor of Germany, who died in 1843, was madly in love with melons, and his immoderate passion for them finally carried him to the tomb as a consequence of an indigestion. The same accident, and from precisely the same cause, put an end to the career of the Emperor Maximilian II., of Germany. Tasso, the Italian poet, had a marked predilection for sugared dishes, well baked in the oven, and for all kinds of fruits and confectionery. He was so fond of sugar that he always put it in his salad. Henry IV., of France, had a passionate fondness for melons and oysters. He used to eat immoderately of both, but it would appear that the wine of Arbois, of which he made a great use, saved him from the indigestion to which the great indulgence in such aliments exposed him. Charles XII., King of Sweden, was certainly not a difficult eater, since Voltaire records that a slice of bread and butter was his supreme choice in matters of diet. Crebillon, *filz*, the French novelist, who died in 1777, was an insatiable devourer of oysters. A certain English gentleman, named Rogerson, gave great preference to ortolans—at least, the final act of his life seems to prove this. We are assured that this disciple of Apicius expended, in the space of nine months, the almost incredible sum of one hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling upon his table and culinary experiments. In fact, his whole fortune had been thus swallowed up; and seeing himself reduced to want, he employed a guinea, the last that remained to him out of his large fortune, in the preparation of an ortolan, his favourite meat. Then, having tasted, with all the delectation of a consummate epicure, this ultimate dish, he quietly fell back and blew his brains out. Voltaire was extravagantly fond of coffee, which he drank to excess, as Dr. Johnson did tea. The same characteristic was exhibited by the naturalist Buffon, who almost lived upon coffee. Schiller, the great German poet, who died in 1805, was so extremely fond of ham that he ate it nearly every day, and, notwithstanding this remarkable taste, he drank but sparingly. Frederick the Great, of Prussia, had a notable predilection for a dish called *potenta*. This was a species of barley-cake reduced to powder and roasted. On this, and a cup of coffee (in his passion for which the prince fairly rivalled his friend Voltaire), he used to regale himself with much gusto. Not a very great debauch for a king or a philosopher. Napoleon was another great coffee-drinker, and would take sometimes twenty cups per day, without apparent injury. It was his only marked taste in dietary matters, the other pleasures of the table having been, in a measure, indifferent to him. This caused his chamberlain, M. Cussy, a renowned gourmand, to lament that the "sentiment of the cuisine" was wholly wanting in the emperor; and he cited this defect as an evidence that even the greatest men cannot be perfect.

MR. HOLMES COOTE, the eminent surgeon, in reference to the muzzling of dogs in London, says, "Hydrophobia is extremely rare in this, and I believe, in most other countries. I have passed thirty-five years at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and I can remember only two cases in that institution during the whole of that period."

TOBACCO.—An excellent sample of tobacco has lately been shown, manufactured by Mr. Norrie, of West Maitland, New South Wales. This sample is

similar to that which he exhibited at the late agricultural show, and obtained the prize, but its having now acquired a little more age, the tobacco is in a better condition than at the time of the show, and will bear favourable comparison even with tobacco manufactured from American leaf. This tobacco smokes with a pleasant taste, leaves a pure white ash, and it pure from that acidity which often characterizes colonial tobacco, and arises chiefly from want of care in drying the leaf. It is now evident that it needs only proper attention to the various stages of the manufacture for colonial makers to produce an article of a very superior description to that usually found in the market.

A ROMANCE OF THE PEERAGE.

GREAT excitement has been caused at Hexham and the west of Northumberland by a lady, who claims to be a descendant of Ratcliffe, the last earl of Derwentwater, taking possession of Dilstone Castle, about three miles from Hexham, and claiming all the estates once belonging to that unfortunate adherent of Prince Charles; which estates belong to Greenwich Hospital. The *Hexham Courant* gives the following account of the strange proceedings: "This morning great excitement was occasioned in the neighbourhood of Dilstone by the appearance of Amelia, Countess of Derwentwater, with a retinue of servants, at the old baronial castle of her ancestors, Dilstone Old Castle, and at once taking possession of the old ruin. Her ladyship, who is a fine-looking, elderly lady, was dressed in an Austrian military uniform, and wore a sword by her side in the most approved fashion. She was accompanied, as we have said, by several retainers, who were not long in unloading the waggon load of furniture which they had brought with them, and quickly deposited the various goods and chattels in the old castle, the rooms of which, as most of our readers are aware, are without roofs; but a plentiful supply of stout tarpaulings, which are provided for that purpose, will soon make the apartments habitable, if not quite so comfortable as those which the countess has just left. In the course of the morning her ladyship was visited by Mr. C. G. Grey, the receiver to the Greenwich Hospital Estates, who informed her she was trespassing upon the property of the Commissioners, and that he would be obliged to report the circumstance to their lordships. Her ladyship received Mr. Grey with great courtesy, and informed that gentleman she was acting under the advice of her legal advisers, and that she was quite prepared to defend the legality of her proceedings. The sides of the principal room have already been hung with the Derwentwater family pictures, to some of which the countess bears a marked resemblance, and the old baronial flag of the unfortunate family already floats proudly from the summit of the fine, though old and dilapidated, tower."

RAISINS IN CALIFORNIA.—California is likely to become the greatest raisin-producing country in the world. The best grape for this purpose is one of the Malaga varieties. The process is to break the stems of the principal bunches and thus prevent the flow of sap. The fruit then shrinks in the sun, the watery portion is dried, and the sugar concentration increased in proportion. Last year one farm yielded twenty-five thousand pounds, and a single Isabella vine bore twenty-five hundred bunches.

BOYS WHO SMOKE.—Dr. Decaisne, in the course of investigations on the influence of tobacco on the circulation, has been struck with the large number of boys, aged from nine to fifteen years, who smoke; and has been led to inquire into the connection of this habit with impairment of the general health. He has observed thirty-eight boys, aged from nine to fifteen, who smoked more or less. Of these, distinct symptoms were present in twenty-seven. In twenty-two there were various disorders of the circulation—*bruit de souffle* in the neck, palpitation, disorders of digestion, slowness of intellect, and a more or less marked taste for strong drinks. In three, the pulse was intermittent. In eight, there was found on examination more or less marked diminution of the red corpuscles; in twelve, there was rather frequent epistaxis; ten had disturbed sleep; and four had slight ulcerations of the mucous membrane of the mouth, which disappeared on ceasing from the use of tobacco for some days. In children who were very well nourished, the disorder was, in general, less marked. As to the ages, eight of the boys were from 9 to 12 years old; nineteen from 12 to 15. The duration of the habit of smoking was: in eleven, from six months to a year; and in sixteen, more than two years. The ordinary treatment of anemia in general produced no effect so long as the smoking was continued; but, when this was desisted from, health was soon perfectly restored, if there were no organic disease.



[THE TRIAL OF THE POISON.]

YU-LU.

CHAPTER XIV.

WHILE Paul Arden and Yu-lu were upon the lake, let us look into the palace of the Prince Kong-ti at Nankin. It was on the very morning after the terrible discovery was made by Tsi at the house in the country. The prince was in one of his own private rooms drinking tea. It was well into the forenoon, and yet the grandee had only just risen. His face was pale and careworn, though ever and anon a flush would pass over his features, moving the muscles with quick, decided emotions. Several times he looked at his watch, and at length he left his tea and finished his morning's toilet. Ere long after this was done a page entered the room, and informed him that two officers wished to see him. He ordered them to be shown in to him, and two fat, greasy-looking mandarins were ushered into the room.

"I bend my head to the great prince of Nankin," fervently uttered the first, making a bow almost to the floor.

"I shut my eyes in the presence of the illustrious brother of the great Son of Heaven," said the second, bowing lower than his companion.

"Tay-tsu, and you, Li-tsung, are both welcome," said the prince; and thereupon there succeeded any quantity of bowing of heads, swinging of hands, scraping of feet, and uttering of set phrases.

"You have sent for us," said Tay-tsu, after he had settled his obese body into a large chair.

"You have sent for us," repeated Li-tsung, accompanying his words with a sudden motion that deposited his load of fat in a second chair.

"Yes, I have sent for you," said the prince, now seating himself. As he spoke he looked very grave and sad, and a tear was forced into his eyes. "I have sent for you," he continued, "to open to your ears a thing that will make the nation weep."

Kong-ti here stopped, and wiped away the tear which had grown cold upon his cheek, and then he continued:

"I fear that the great spirit of heaven wants another soul to keep him company. Niso can live but a short time longer."

"The princess!" cried both the mandarins at a breath.

"Even so," said the prince. "The dark death-spirit has been at her side for many days and many nights, and I fear she cannot live to see the setting of this day's sun. I would have you prepare the people for the sad intelligence, and have the bonzes

all at prayer continually. Let the drums in the temples be beaten without ceasing, and let Buddha be propitiated with befitting gifts."

At this point the prince fairly wept, and the fat mandarins shook with well-managed emotion.

"What form of disease threatens our illustrious lady?" at length asked Tay-tsu.

"Alas! I know not," groaned Kong-ti. "It is a strange eating away of life, such as I have never before seen. You may go now and do as I have bid. Let not the noise be too great, for I am sad, and rolled in the dust of affliction."

The mandarins arose from their seats and bowed very low; then they backed out from the apartment, and went away to perform their melancholy mission. As soon as the prince was left alone he arose from his seat and started across the room; but he was not left long to enjoy his own society undisturbed, for, shortly after the mandarins had left, Li entered his presence.

"Ah, good Li," uttered the grandee, "you are come in season. What of the princess?"

"I think all is well," returned the attendant.

"But I have prepared our people for her death. Think you it will follow?"

"Yes. After you left me last night, I went around and ascended a tree near the window of her chamber. By the strong moonlight I could see the bed and the woman, for my position just admitted of that, and no more. I saw her take the bowl and drink, and I think she must have drank considerably."

"A single swallow would prove fatal, in time," said the prince, "and three swallows will kill her in less than from sun to sun. Did you see her this morning?"

"No, she had not arisen. I asked for her, but she was not up."

"Then the work is going on," said the prince, with a look and tone of relief. "I think she will see the last of this life before the day is done. She will be better off away from this earth."

"I think you will be well rid of her before the sun is set," added Li, with a congratulatory look, "and then nothing will be in your way."

The prince took two or three turns up and down the room, evidently in deep thought. He did not seem to be troubled at all by what he was doing, but only by what he should do, after the darkest part of his work should be consummated. His idea of woman was not an exalted one. Like most of his countrymen he looked upon the other sex as something only fashioned for his use and service, and he never realized that there were such things as mutual obligations between husband and wife. He was sorry that

his laws would not allow him to marry as many wives as he pleased, for then he might have been spared the trouble of his present work. To be sure he might take to himself as many "hand-maidens" as he could afford to buy, but she whom he now sought could never be dragged to a position so degrading. The emotion uppermost in his bosom was gratitude that the way to the possession of the matchless Yu-lu was now opened to him—he felt no sorrow for the terrible plan he was obliged to adopt to carry forward his purpose.

At length the prince stopped in his walk and looked at his attendant.

"Good Li," he said, "you may go at once and send off messengers to inform the relatives of Niso that she is surely dying. Have them informed that their kinswoman is seized with a dreadful malady, and—"

The prince was here broken in upon by a loud noise from the hall, and before he had time to take any steps to ascertain its cause, the door of his apartment was burst open, and a woman, all dust-covered and toil-worn, rushed in. Half a dozen of the servants followed in great haste to drag her back, but the prince had recognized the new-comer, and with a quick motion he drove his servants back. It was the woman Lan who had come. Kong-ti uttered an exclamation of wild astonishment when he saw her, and as soon as the room was clear, and he knew that the servants were out of hearing, he sank down into a chair.

"Lan—Lan," he cried, trembling violently, "why are you come?"

But it was some moments before the woman could reply, and a second time the prince asked the question. In time, however, she spoke:

"My master," she said, "did you know that Fank-king had left the place beneath the temples?" Her voice was deeply agitated.

"Left his post? Fank-king? Left the temples?" exclaimed the prince. "Has he dared to do it?"

"Then you did not send a young man there to take his place?" said the woman, speaking fearfully.

"Send a young man? By heaven, woman, speak, and tell me what you mean?" cried the prince, starting up from his seat, and grasping the messenger by her arm.

"A few nights since, my master—on the very night after you were last there—a young man came down and told us that you had sent him in Fank-king's place, and that we should see Fank-king no more."

"It's false! all, all false! By my great power,

I'll tear the liar limb from limb. But you should not have left him there, Lan."

"Ah, my master," returned the woman, recoiling as she spoke, "he fled before I came."

"But Yu-lu! You have not dared to leave her alone?"

The woman dared not speak. She moved still farther back, but the prince followed her up.

"Speak!" he gasped, seizing her again by the arm. "Tell me all you know. Did you leave Yu-lu there alone?"

"She has fled!" whispered Lan; and as she spoke she sank down upon her knees and clasped her hands.

The prince recoiled a few steps like one who has received a death-stroke. He glared upon the woman before him, and with an instinctive movement snatched his dagger from its sheath, and in a moment more he put it back again.

"Fled!" he at length uttered, in a deep, husky tone. "She fled, and you yet alive?"

"Alas, my master, I could not help it. Listen to me, and you shall see that I am not to blame. Fanning is the one who must have been overcome."

The prince sat down and beckoned for Lan to proceed, while Li went to see that no one was near the doors. After this the woman went on and told her story. She told how Fanning had left the subterranean apartments, and how, shortly afterwards, she had given entrance to the young stranger, without noticing that it was not the eunuch. She told how frankly he had spoken to her, and how he offered to watch during the night. On the next morning she had found herself alone. She went up among the ruins and searched them all through, and when she found they were gone, she had hastened at once to Nankin.

"And Fan-king?" uttered the prince, when the woman had closed the story.

"I have seen nothing of him."

Kong-ti was stricken with a fearful emotion. It was not all anger, nor was it all sorrow. It was a sort of wild, tumultuous thrill of varied passion, and for a while he seemed totally unable to think or act.

"Prince," said Li, seeing how his master was situated, "she has evidently fled, and can only be caught by quick pursuit. Some one must have lain in wait at the ruins and discovered your secret, and thus gained access to the place. Perhaps it was some one who had known her before."

"Lan," exclaimed the prince, at this juncture, "did you see them together—this young man and Yu-lu?"

"For a few moments."

"How did they appear?"

"Once she had been weeping, I am sure. I did not think of it then, but the thought has come across me since that there was much love between them."

"By heaven!" cried the prince, striking his breast with both his hands, "I'll scour the empire but I find them. You know not which way they went?"

"I know they came this way as far as the hamlet of Leaso, and from thence they must have struck off farther to the southward," replied Lan. "There, at the hamlet, I heard of a young man and a boy. The man I know must have been the same one who came to our retreat, and the boy must have been Yu-lu."

The prince thought a few moments while he walked up and down the room, and when he stopped he seemed to have regained his strength of mind.

"Li," he said, "I cannot leave my palace now, for I must be here. I wish my wife were not quite so ill. But we have faithful men. Send off three detachments of three men each. Take my old guard. You take such men as you please, and go direct to Tai-ping, and from thence follow on towards the Tai-hou lake. Let the others keep farther to the southward. Oh, bring them to me, and you shall grieve beneath the weight of the wealth I will heap upon you. Let the others think this is a handmaiden of mine, and beware that you do not unguardedly tell too much. Perhaps you can find her, Li."

"The country shall be well searched, at all events," was Li's reply. "If I can but once get upon their track I will have them."

"Do not spare horseflesh," cried the excited grandee.

"Never fear but that I shall take every means of motive power within my reach," confidently returned Li. "I am not in the habit of hesitating at trifles."

Li then turned to the woman and obtained a minute description of the young man's person, and when he had gained this point, he set out to make his arrangements for departure, while the prince thought it safe to confine Lan where she could hold no communication with any of the servants.

In half-an-hour from that time Li rode out from the palace-court, followed by eleven men, two of whom he meant for his own companions, while the other nine were to be divided as the prince had

directed. Kong-ti saw them depart; and when they were gone a cold, damp chill seemed to settle about his heart. Until the present time nothing had occurred to disturb the current of his base hopes, but now the waters were moved, and the turmoil made him uneasy, for a dim fear settled down over his soul that this might not be the last of his troubles.

CHAPTER XV.

It was quite late when the princess arose from her bed on the morning following Tsi's night-watch. She felt much refreshed by her rest, and her appetite for breakfast was keen, and as soon as she had performed her toilette she sat down to her meal. While she ate she noticed that her attendant was very downcast and thoughtful, and she inquired its cause.

"If you know," returned Tsi, "you would not wonder that I am sad. Oh, I have had such dreams during the past night—such strange, terrible dreams—that I have not got over them. It must have been because I slept so much in the afternoon and evening. Of course I must have been restless through the night."

"But what were your dreams?" earnestly inquired the princess.

"I will tell you when we sit down this forenoon. Oh, they were very strange dreams. Perhaps you can interpret them for me; and who knows but they may be good dreams after all. I hope they may."

"So do I, for your sake," said Niso.

"But one of them was such a marvellous dream," resumed the maid, endeavouring to appear as free as possible. "I dreamed that I made a certain kind of beverage, which I gave to a dog, and the effect was wonderful beyond measure. So strongly did that dream impress me that I have even prepared the drink this morning, and have resolved to catch one of the dogs that belong about the place, and try the effect upon him. Do not think me foolish, lady."

"Oh, I shall not think you foolish, my good Tsi," returned the princess, with a smile, "but I do think this rather foolish."

"Yet you are willing I should try the experiment. I will bring the dog up here, and try it in your presence. Oh, the dream was so vivid."

"You say you have the beverage all prepared?" said the princess.

"Yes. It's a curious compound, and after I have tried the experiment, I will tell you how it was made."

Now the princess knew that Tsi was not one to be idly moved by mere whims, and she felt considerable curiosity to see the strange experiment tried; she felt more curiosity than she would have wished her maid to know of; so as soon as the breakfast things were cleared away, she told her maid that she might go down and get the dog. Tsi hastened away, and there she found a number of small dogs the domestics had collected about the place, by means of the waste bits of food they had thrown out. She called one of the smallest of the pack, and without difficulty took it in her arms.

It was a very small, red-eyed, white-haired animal, of the lap-dog species; and hastening away, to be clear from observation, she took it up to her lady's room.

"I hope your concoction will not hurt the little fellow," said the princess, as she stroked the fine hair of the animal.

"I don't know," returned Tsi, hiding her face; "but surely the ingredients I put in ought not to do him harm."

The maid left the dog with her mistress, and then went and brought the bowl of tea she had set away in the closet. She took the dog in her lap, and the little animal placed his nose to the beverage, but would not drink. The princess would have urged that the brute should be set at liberty, but her curiosity was now fully excited, and she did not interrupt the girl's movements. As soon as Tsi became satisfied that the dog would not drink, she went to the closet and fetched a spoon, and having secured the animal's legs, she placed his head between her knees.

"It is curious," she said, looking up at her mistress. "I think I dreamed that the beverage was not drunk at first. But wait, my lady, and I am sure we shall see some strange result."

As Tsi ceased speaking, she commenced to feed the dog from the bowl with her spoon, nor did she stop until full half of the tea was gone. After this she sat the animal down, and let him run at liberty upon the floor. He did not seem to like the treatment he had received, but after one or two savage growls, and an innumerable number of quaint evolutions, he lay down and began to play with the silken tassels of one of the window curtains.

"How long will it be before you think your charm

will begin to operate?" asked the princess, with an incredulous smile.

"I cannot tell," returned the girl, watching the dog narrowly. "I am not sure that it will operate at all, but I think it will. If it does not, I will never trust to a dream again."

For nearly half an hour the dog lay there and played with the tassels, but at the end of that time he uttered a quick, low whine, and stretched himself out at full length upon the carpet. For a few moments he remained in that position, and then he sprang to his feet and darted across the room. After this he made several circles in his movements, and once more he lay down upon the carpet. His eyes were very bright, and they were fixed on the girl who had given him the drink, with a wild glaring gaze.

"It begins its work," whispered Tsi, with a shudder.

"It surely does," answered the princess, gazing fixedly on the dog. "But do you not think he suffers?"

Tsi made no reply, for her attention was now wholly taken up by the dog. The little fellow had reached his four-paws forward to their full extent, and his head was resting sideways upon them. It could be seen that his breathing was short, quick and weak, and that his eyes were losing their brightness. Once he made a motion as though he would have arisen, but the effort failed. His limbs were now drawn up, and the motion of his chest grew less and less. There was another low whine, one more movement of the head from side to side—a convulsive heaving of the breast—a nervous gathering up of the feet, and a low struggle, as though he were trying to hold upon his departing breath. A moment he remained thus, and then a sudden relaxing of his muscles—his head dropped, he rolled over upon his side, and, with one or two slight movements, he settled into rest. There was no more movement—no more gazing of the eyes, for they were half-closed and lead-like. The princess started from her chair and approached the spot, and with her foot she moved the inanimate body, but there were no signs of life. Then she stooped down and raised the animal's head in her hands, and a moment's gaze gave the truth to her mind.

"Tsi," she said, in a low tone, "the dog is dead."

The girl covered her face with her hands, but made no reply.

"It was a cruel experiment," the princess continued, "for I would not harm even a dog. I am sorry you did it, but it cannot be helped now, so you need not mourn over it. Come, I did not mean to chide you. I do not blame you, good Tsi. Do not let it affect you so."

The girl raised her head and looked into her lady's face.

"Come," resumed Niso, in a kind, persuasive tone, "you need not feel so pained about it, but tell me now what was your dream?"

"Oh, it was a terrible dream," uttered Tsi, again covering her face, and shuddering.

"But what was the nature of the drink you prepared?"

"Wait a moment, and I will tell you," said the girl.

She looked up as she spoke, and after gazing for a moment upon her mistress, she looked upon the dog. She was evidently trying to gather strength for the task before her. She was determined to keep the fearful secret no longer, for it was now time that the whole should be known.

"Lady," she said, moving closer up to her mistress, and speaking almost in a whisper, "you must prepare your soul for a story that will come upon you terribly. Since we have been in this house I have watched every movement. I slept last evening so that I might watch through the night. I did watch. That bowl which stands there upon the table is the same which I carried into your chamber when you retired last night."

The princess stretched forth her hand, and laid it upon her companion's arm.

"I drank from that bowl!" she whispered, turning pale as death.

"No," quickly returned Tsi. "You have not tasted that beverage. I changed your bowl before you drank. There was danger about you, but my eyes were not removed from you till you were safe."

Niso trembled violently, but the colour came back to her face. For some moments she gazed into her companion's face without speaking. She seemed to be fearful of trusting her speech. She dared not ask the question that trembled upon her lips, for she was fearful that the truth might be more dreadful than the suspicion she already tried to entertain. She endeavoured to think of some one whom she had wronged, and who might thus be led to seek revenge, but she could not remember any living being who had received wrong at her hands.

"Tsi," she at length said, with all the power she could command, "tell me what you have seen."

"You are strong—and will not sink beneath the knowledge; for you are safe."

"Speak on. I am ready."

Tsi hesitated for a moment, and then she told what she had seen on the first night—of the departure of a man from the chamber—of her suspicions respecting the tea, and of her subsequent experiment upon the cormorant. Then she told of all that she had seen on the night last past, except that she did not mention the name of the man who had done the deed.

"I removed the tea as soon as I could," she said in conclusion, "and in its place I put some which I had prepared for the purpose. I kept the beverage which I took from your side, for I was resolved that there should be no room for doubt. You have seen its power, and you know what would have been the result had you drunk it."

The princess was not thunder-struck, nor was she filled with terror. She seemed to have no feeling beyond a dull, painful fear—a fear that seemed rather to suspend mental action and leave a chill upon the soul.

"You saw not the man's features?" she at length whispered, gazing half timidly up into her companion's face.

"Yes, I saw them plainly."

"Oh. Did you recognize them?"

"Yes."

"And were not mistaken?"

"There was no room for mistake, for the rays of the light shone full upon them."

"Could you tell me who it was?"

"If you would wish to know."

"Tell me."

"It was—the Prince Kong-ti."

"My husband?"

"Yes."

"There could be no mistake?"

"No; mistake were impossible. It was he that poisoned your tea, and whom I afterwards heard conversing with Li beneath the window of this room."

The princess arose from her chair, and stood over her maid. There was at first something almost like a smile upon her lips, but in a moment more 'twas gone, and the features grew rigid as marble. She laid her hands upon Tsi's head and attempted to speak, but could not. Then a low, sharp cry broke from her lips, and she sank upon the floor utterly insensible. The faithful maid sprang to her side and lifted her up, and, with considerable exertion, she raised her upon a silken couch that stood beneath the window. She did not call for help, for she dared not trust the secret with others, so she resolved to do the work of resuscitation herself.

After she had placed her mistress upon the couch, she hastened for water, and by repeated exertions she at length succeeded in bringing the unfortunate woman back to life. Niao opened her eyes and looked up, and made signs to be raised to a sitting posture. After this she gazed upon her attendant with a wild, haggard look.

"Are you better?" asked Tsi, still bathing the lady's temples.

"Better?" repeated the princess, casting her eyes slowly about the room, as though she sought something which she had not yet forgotten. They at length rested upon the body of the ill-fated dog. "It is all real," she continued, speaking in a hoarse whisper; "I heard it all right. There was poison, Tsi—poison in my drink—and—my husband put it there!"

"He did, most surely," said the maid, bending down and smoothing back the hair from the sufferer's pale brow. "And now we must act. As soon as you can grow calm we will think the matter over. Of course you know that the prince wishes you out of the way."

"Yes. He loves another!" groaned the heart-stricken wife.

"Perhaps he does. But let that pass now. Do you not think it would be best to flee from this place as soon as possible? You know the prince's power, and you know now what his will is with regard to yourself. If you can make your escape you may at least live."

It was some time before the princess spoke, but when she did speak she had grown more calm, and her voice, though weak and low, was yet firm and decided.

"Alas, my good, faithful friend," she said, "you have saved me, and to your judgment I will trust. Do as you think best, and I shall not object. I have nothing to live for now, but life was given me as a blessing by a power I dare not thwart, and I will not throw it away. Though all is dark as the grave to me now, and though the remainder of my life must be spent in the valley of sorrow and sadness,

yet I would not die, but I will live and pray for him who has so basely wronged me. What shall we do?"

"I will tell you," replied the maid, who was much relieved at finding her mistress so calm. "All day yesterday Li was watching you most nervously, and he was most assuredly looking for the effect of the poison that had been placed by your bedside. This morning he came to me and wished to see you, but I told him you had not arisen, and rather gave him to understand that you were not well. Now there will evidently be a watch set upon you to-day. You shall retire to your bed, and if you are called for I will state that you are not well enough to be seen. I will give out that you are seized with a wonderful malady, and that the very sight of visitors turns your brain. If we can thus keep matters along until to-night, we will flee under the cover of the darkness."

The princess promised to be governed entirely by the faithful Tsi's will, and shortly afterwards she allowed herself to be undressed and assisted to her bed. After this the maid concealed the body of the dog, and then set about preparing for the object she had in view.

During the forenoon three messengers arrived at different times from Nankin to inquire after the health of the princess, and to each one Tsi gave the same answer. Her mistress could not be seen, for she was very ill. Towards the middle of the afternoon the prince himself came, and to him Tsi gave the same answer.

"You had better not think of seeing my poor lady," she urged, tearing her hair in great grief, "for the very sight of anyone makes her worse. Perhaps in the morning she may be better. Will you not come then?"

Kong-ti was not very strenuous. He tried to make it appear that he wept, and after bidding the girl be very careful and attentive, he took his leave.

The day wore slowly away, and when the shades of night had fairly settled around the great building Tsi sought the side of her mistress. Niao was very calm now, and she arose from her bed and put on the garb of a fisherman which her companion had procured. Tsi was clothed in a dress of the same description, and thus disguised, they moved out into the drawing-room. Here Niao took what money she had, and then noiselessly followed her maid from the apartment. They reached the hall without notice, and with quickly-beating hearts they crept through an open window upon the low verandah, and from thence they stepped down into the garden.

The stars were shining brightly in the clear heavens, and the fresh breeze was playing mildly with the flower-decked foliage. The two women noticed not the dampness that came up from the marsh—they only bent their ears eagerly for a few moments to be assured that no one watched them from behind, and that the way was clear ahead, and then they glided swiftly away by one of the hedge-grown walks that led towards the road.

CHAPTER XVI.

On the next morning after Paul had landed from the dismantled vessel he arose very early, and having obtained from Yu-lu a promise that she would not leave the room until he came back, he went forth to see if he could find suitable horses for his journey. Anything, almost, with fair strength, would answer for himself, but he wanted an easy, gentle beast for Yu-lu. He went out first into the stable, but he found nothing there for sale. The man, however, who had charge of the place, and who, for a wonder, was awake, directed him to the house of a man who would be likely to have some beasts for sale, and at the same time gave the information that the said man, whose name was Fou-chang, was the only person in the place who kept horses. The house was pointed out to our hero, it being in sight, and about half a mile distant, and with quick steps he hastened away. He was not long in reaching the place, and as he approached the open yard in front of the building, he saw a man holding two horses by the bridles.

"Is this Fou-chang?" asked the youth, as he came up, and looked, first at the two horses, and then at him who held them. The animals were good-looking beasts, and took our hero's eye at once.

"Suppose I am Fou-chang?" returned the man, eyeing Paul sharply.

"Why, I have been directed to you as one who might sell me horses."

"Ah, yes. And how many would you want?"

"Two will answer."

"Well, I've got horses. Here's two, for instance. If you want them very much, perhaps I might accommodate you."

"I do want them very much, and I should like them at once. Are these animals kind?"

"One of them is. That one, now, a woman could ride—just the most gentle creature living."

"Just what I want. I want one for myself, and one for a boy who is with me."

"Well, there isn't much difference between a boy and a woman as far as horses are concerned," said the man, with something like a smile upon his features. "But suppose we can trade, when should you want them?"

"Immediately."

"Then you want to be on the road at once?"

"Yes. The horses will evidently suit, and you may set your price."

"Oh, you'd better try them first. Never make a blind bargain, sir, especially in horseflesh. Now suppose you just mount this one—this kindest one, and I'll take the other. You came from the inn?"

"Yes."

"Well, we'll ride down there, and that will tell you something what they are. Just you hold the reins while I run in and tell the folks where I am going."

Paul took charge of the horses, and the man hurried into the house, but he soon returned, and then our hero mounted the animal which had been pointed out to him as the most kind and gentle. He found the beast to be all he could wish, and he could not but congratulate himself on the success of his errand, for he was resolved to buy both the horses, let the price be what it might, knowing that he could sell them again at Shanghai.

When they reached the door of the inn, Paul dismounted, and the horse-dealer did the same.

"I will take them if your price be not too exorbitant," the youth said.

"Oh, there won't be any trouble about the price," returned the other. "But suppose your boy comes out and tries his beast? Then you'll be sure to know."

"Never mind that," said Paul, rather tartly, for he began to be anxious to get rid of the fellow. I want the horses, and if you will sell them I will buy them."

"Certainly, I'll sell them. For that which you rode I want three golden ounces, and for the other I want two golden ounces and five pieces of silver."

Paul at once accepted the offer, and having paid the money, he led the horses round to the stable, and there gave orders for them to be kept in readiness, as he should want them in a very short time. He took no more notice of the fellow of whom he had bought the animals; but as soon as he had seen them safely cared for, he hastened to the room where he had left Yu-lu. He found her there, but she was pale as marble, and trembled fearfully.

"Yu-lu, my love, what has happened?" cried the youth, springing forward and laying his hand upon the maiden's arm.

"Lost! lost!" she groaned. "Oh, Paul—my own dear Paul—we are lost!"

The youth started up in terror. He saw that Yu-lu could have no groundless fears, and his own heart began to sink within him.

"What is it?" he asked. "What has happened since I have been away?"

"Li! Li is here!" she replied, gazing furtively around as she spoke.

"Li here?" repeated Paul. "Do you mean the prince's own man?"

"Yes. He is Kong-ti's only male confidant. Oh, Paul, you did not know him?"

"I have not seen him."

"Not seen him!" uttered Yu-lu, gazing up in astonishment. "That was he who rode by your side!"

"What! just now?"

"And of him I bought the horses—and to him I spoke of my boy!" groaned the youth, sinking into a chair. "But," he added, in a moment afterwards, "perhaps he does not know me."

But such a hope was not long to remain with Paul Ardeen, for he well remembered how the man had eyed him, and how he had hung about him. Yet that circumstance, be it as it might, could have no effect. He must escape from the place as quickly as possible, and that too, without being seen by Li, for he would surely recognize Yu-lu if he were to see her face. His greatest fear was, that he should not be able to get at his horses, for he had reason to believe that Li was watching in the stable. He told his thoughts to his companion, and she urged him to flee from the place at once.

Paul pondered upon the subject a few moments, and then he crept out into the narrow hall, for from the back window of this place he could see the stable. He looked out and saw Li still standing there, and he could now see that the fellow was anxiously watching for something. He saw at once that to attempt to obtain the horses would be not only useless but really dangerous, so he returned to Yu-lu, and bade her prepare at once to set off.

"It is no use," he said, "to think of obtaining our beasts, for Li is on the watch there. We must glide

carefully out at the front door, and hasten off towards the wood which flanks the edge of the lake beyond the little river. Perhaps we may yet escape."

Yu-lu made no reply, but with quick movements she prepared herself, and in a few moments she was ready. The youth examined his pistols very carefully, and having seen that the caps were dry and clean, and that the barrels were filled, he placed them so that they could be easily reached, and then moved carefully out into the narrow hall. Yu-lu clung closely to his arm, and he could almost hear the quick beating of her heart, for he plainly felt its pulsations against his arm. He looked down the steep, ladder-like stairs, and saw that the way was clear.

"Courage," he whispered, as he began to descend the stairs. "Let us hope for the best, but have our hearts prepared for the worst. If we can only get clear from this house."

"I am strong," returned Yu-lu. "Look only to yourself, and lead the way."

Paul returned a look of gratitude, and with a steady step he kept on. The lower hall was reached, and yet they were alone and unobserved. The yard was clear, and our hero stepped forth from the door. The stable was at the back of the house, so that they could not be seen from that place, and if Li only remained by the horses, as he probably would, the chances of escape were almost equal with those of detection.

The road, which was only a few yards from the house, was flanked by hedges of yellow rose-trees, and under cover of this hedge Paul hoped to make his way. A single instant he stopped in the yard to see that he was not noticed, and then he glided forth to the road. The hedge was reached, and keeping close beneath it, the fugitives hastened on. The path that led to the river was reached, the river itself was crossed, and in fifteen minutes more they were under cover of the thick wood that lined a portion of the shore of the lake. Here they stopped to take breath and listen, but no following footsteps were heard.

Paul considered a few moments upon the subject of the direction he should take. He saw a path that led up through the woods from the lake, but he dared not take it, for in case of pursuit that path would be sure to be followed; so he struck off through the trackless wild, taking his course about north-east. There was little underbrush, and with care they made comparatively easy progress. At the distance of about five miles they came to an open country through which ran the imperial canal. They had to walk over a mile before they found a bridge by which they could cross, and after crossing this, they had no more woods to conceal them, save now and then a clump of tall trees that were cultivated by the neighbouring peasants. A number of low huts were seen scattered about over the even country, but Paul chose not to trust to any of them for shelter, hoping that he might find some safer retreat before noon.

Nearly three hours must now have elapsed since they left the inn, and Paul judged that he was at least ten miles from the place of departure; but the way ahead looked not so inviting as he could have wished, for the whole country, for miles around, was nearly level, and even were he to leave the road and strike off into the fields, it would not avail him anything towards concealment. But with a brave heart he kept on, and Yu-lu assured him that she was not yet fatigued.

(To be continued.)

TURNPIKE ABOLITION.—Under a recent Act three statutes specified in one of the schedules—11th of George IV., cap. 113, 1st and 2nd of Victoria, cap. 98, and the 17th of Victoria, cap. 47—are to be repealed on the 31st of December next.

A CURIOUS SUPERSTITION.—A horse's head has been dug up from beneath the floor of a room in the house I write in. It was buried there, I am told, to cause an echo in the room. Can any of your readers throw light on this very curious practice? Some years ago a horse's head was introduced into one of the parish churches in a city in the south of Ireland, and placed under the organ by an enthusiastic parishioner, with the object of giving increased effect to the music.—W. C. LEDGER, M.A.

A CANOE VOYAGE.—A notable feat has been performed by one of the Canoe Club. The owner of the canoe Midge crossed the Irish Channel from Donaghadee to Portpatrick in his little craft. The passage, owing to an unfavourable wind and cross tides, occupied seven hours, during which the canoeist, although provided with a regular canoe *cuisine* and materials, in addition to his luggage, was unable to take other refreshment than bread and cold meat, with some brandy and water. On arriving at Portpatrick, the

Scotch people at first refused to believe that "the man sitting on the water" had really come from Ireland; but when convinced of the fact they heartily joined in the cheer with which the passengers and sailors of the Donaghadee and Portpatrick steam packet welcomed the solitary adventurer. Since the days when our remote ancestors, in skin-covered coracles, crossed the seas between the islands, this is perhaps the first time that so small a vessel has traversed the same channel. It may be doubted, indeed, whether those coracles were so small as the Midge, which weighs only 50 lbs. Captain Blacker, commanding the Dolphin packet, which was just preparing to start for Donaghadee, gave seamanlike welcome and hospitality to the canoe and its skipper, and reconveyed them to the Irish shore in a very much shorter time than they had taken on their "voyage out."

The velocipede is suggested as a substitute for the horse for the rapid transportation of infantry. Celerity of movement is the desideratum; for it is a maxim that the strength of an army, like the power in mechanics, is estimated by multiplying the mass by the rapidity. Now, as to comparative speed. Recently, in France, there was a race between a velocipedist and a horseman for a distance of forty-five miles, when the latter won by only twenty-five minutes, after a run of six hours. It is stated that but for a head wind that blew all the time the machine would have won. Imagine a body of troops moving on the enemy mounted on the velocipede. It would be a great sight.

SIR ALVICK.

CHAPTER XLI.

WE must return to Hugh De Lisle, who, on being pushed into Ulster Keep by Sir Alvick, stumbled and almost fell, for, being bound, he had not the free use of his limbs.

He gazed about him eagerly as soon as the door was closed upon him, but he had hardly surveyed his dungeon with a single glance when he heard his name called in a whisper.

"Captain De Lisle," whispered the voice.

The single lamp burning in the dungeon was small, badly-trimmed, and nearly dry, so that its dim radiance was rather a mockery than an aid to sight. The dungeon, too, was not small, so that Hugh De Lisle gazed for a moment into the obscurity of the corner from whence the whisper proceeded, before he saw that someone was crouching there.

"Who calls me?" he asked, but in a whisper also, though he supposed the person to be the man, Olin Cline, of whom the baronet had spoken became as an inmate of the prison.

"Evaline Ulster," replied the voice.

And then the speaker arose and advanced to Hugh De Lisle's side.

"What, Evaline!" he exclaimed so loudly that he trembled the very next instant lest the words might have been heard beyond the dungeon. "Great heaven! fair lady, how came you in this place?"

"I was not put in here by Sir Alvick," replied Evaline, as she began to try to untie the cords which bound her lover's hands behind him. "If he knew that I was in here, he would very soon have me imprisoned elsewhere."

"But, dear lady, how came it about that you should be in Ulster Keep a prisoner, and who placed you here?" asked the amazed lover, as Evaline's fair fingers toiled and tugged at his hard-knotted cords.

"I placed myself in this dungeon, Captain De Lisle," she replied. "My old friend, Caton, the hall-porter, kind old man, allowed me to escape from the mansion into the storm, and for a moment I ran blindly here and there in the avenue, not knowing what to do, nor where to go. In an instant I was drenched—almost drowned by the torrents of rain."

"Your garments are soaked and dripping almost now," said De Lisle, as his fingers touched her wet sleeves.

"I care nothing for that, Captain Hugh," replied the brave maiden. "Never heed my wet garments; I am sure they were wet and dripping when we parted after our escape from the roof, though you seem to have no idea that you are as wet as I—"

"I am a soldier and used to such things."

"And I am not an invalid; so say no more of wet garments," replied Evaline, gaily. "The rain, storm, wind, and darkness bewildered me after good Caton let me out. I was terribly frightened too, and, as I said, ran here and there, until I found myself at the door of this keep, which I was surprised to find open—the light of the lamp, dim though it was, seeming to invite me in, and then the thunder and lightning were terrific. I came in for temporary shelter from

the rain and hail. Such a tempest I never was in before. I scarcely know how I came to be here. I ran in blindly, and I am not sure that I did not faint—"

"Thrust your hand into my bosom, dear lady, and you will find a dagger with which you may more easily cut my bonds than untie them," interrupted Hugh De Lisle. "Had not Sir Alvick been so eager in his search for something else, he would have taken my dagger from me as he did my pistols."

"There, your hands are free, Captain De Lisle," said Evaline, triumphantly, "and you must immediately use them to escape from this dungeon."

"It is more prudent to wait, for some time at least, dear lady, for no doubt a guard has been placed before the door; and then I have something to tell you. In the first place, even if I do not escape, I am very confident that it will not be in the power of Sir Alvick to harm me. I have good reason to believe that I have friends at work who will obtain a pardon from the queen for my alleged offences—for as I live, dear lady, I am innocent of—"

"Oh, you need not tell me that," said Evaline, heartily. "I could not love you, did I imagine you capable of treason to your country."

"Thank you, dear lady, for your high opinion of me," replied De Lisle, pressing his lips to her hand.

"I am very proud because you love me and so esteem me; but what if I were to tell you that although I am called Hugh De Lisle, I am the son of Sir Alvick Ulster?"

"I would say that it was a very poor jest," replied Evaline, much surprised at his words.

"You would say that it were far better that Hugh De Lisle should be as men have said of him since he was a child—the son of nobody, would you not?" asked her lover, very gravely—so gravely, indeed, that she gazed in wonder at his features.

She saw that though he was not pale a moment before, he was very pale then.

"Perhaps, I should prefer that to be true," she said, "rather than that he should be the son of Sir Alvick Ulster. But why speak so foolishly, since it is impossible that you should be his son."

"Not impossible, nor even improbable, dear lady, and indeed I am very sure that I am his son," replied Hugh De Lisle, in a sad voice. "Ah, it is as I feared it would be. You shrink from me. Indeed, I cannot blame you, since it would be infamous for you or any maiden to love the son of the man who, perhaps, slew her father."

"Good heaven! and do you suspect that he murdered my father!" exclaimed Evaline, who had slightly recoiled from him when he so gravely intimated that he was Sir Alvick's son.

"I suspect anything and everything evil may have been done by him. I should not be at all surprised to be told that he was the murderer of Sir Malcolm—yet I suspect that only from his manner when you and he conversed together in his study. I know he has been a cruel tyrant to you, and still intends to do you some great wrong. I know he has been, and still is, my deadly enemy, though I have told him that I believe him to be my father—"

"Oh, you may believe so, but it may not, cannot be true," interrupted Evaline.

"And if it be true, Evaline?" he asked.

She did not hesitate for a single instant, but placing her fair hand in his, replied:

"You overheard all that I said to Sir Alvick and Lady Matilda, and will not make me repeat it, will you? You are now no less Hugh De Lisle to me than you were then, and you will always be Hugh De Lisle to me, will you not?"

The lover pressed her to his bosom, and pressed his lips to hers in rapture, as lovers will, saying:

"I fear I am Sir Alvick's son, and yet, since I told him so, I have heard much to lead me to hope that I am not. Let me tell you all briefly."

For several minutes Evaline listened attentively to all he said. He spoke very rapidly and concisely, relating only the salient parts of what he had overheard while he was concealed.

He concluded by saying:

"And now, since there is so much mystery in the matter, dear lady, do you not think that I have reason to hope that I am not Sir Alvick's son?"

Evaline Ulster replied, quickly and eagerly:

"And have you not suspected, dear Hugh, that if the son of the Marquis of Galmount did not die, you may be Lord Edward Charles!"

He had not, and the question came upon him as a keen suggestion; so suddenly did a possibility of its truth flash into his mind that his heart beat fast and thick.

He had sought Sir Alvick Ulster with the firm belief that he was the wicked baronet's son, and not until Evaline spoke as she did, had the suspicion arisen in his mind that, after all, Sir Alvick's fear that he was Edward Charles Fitz-Osborn, might be well-grounded.

"Hark Varly claims to be the son of the marquis," he said.

"That may be," replied Evaline, promptly; "and Hark Varly may really believe that he is all he claims to be. I am sure that Sir Alvick does not believe you are his son; and I am sure that the same belief which made him persecute you in Holland makes him desire your destruction now."

"That I am not ignobly born," remarked Hugh De Lisle, "I have often thought. But the belief may have arisen from my desire to be thought worthy of esteem above my fellows. Until within a little more than a year ago there served in my company a man who called himself Simon Sturley, a rude and somewhat singular man, upon whose mind seemed a great weight of ever-present care. He attached himself to my company years ago, when I was but a subaltern in it myself, and ever afterwards I found this man near me, anxious, in his rude way, to serve me."

"At first I did not like him, because of his face, which expressed surliness rather than fidelity or intelligence. But I found that he was brave in battle and faithful at all times. More than this, I discovered that he watched over me with particular care, and on several occasions his vigilance and courage saved my life. He seemed personally attached to me. I lost him a little more than a year ago, in London, where he was suddenly arrested upon a serious charge. I was under imperative orders to return to Holland immediately, and so had no time to interfere in his behalf, farther than to engage the services of the first lawyer I met to defend him. I do not know how the case terminated. Favourably for Sturley, I suppose, as he is now in the service of Sir Alvick, under the name of John Roffton."

"John Roffton!" exclaimed Evaline. "I know him. A very silent, morose kind of a man, I have always thought."

"He was very ready to serve me to-night," continued Hugh De Lisle. Well, this Simon Sturley or John Roffton, has often hinted that I was of noble birth. I paid no attention to his mysterious hints for he never made them directly to me, but to others."

"I have learned, since I lost him in London, that he does probably know something of my origin. I fear, however, that I am in truth the son of Sir Alvick Ulster and Aspa Jarles."

"Let us hope not," said Evaline, "and if such be true, I will not love you less."

"Thank you for your sweet love, dear lady. And now let us see what chance there may be for our escape."

"Very little, I fear," replied Evaline, mournfully. "I have heard that Ulster keep is as strong as a gaol, though it is built of wood."

Hugh De Lisle, however, was not one to despair, for he had great confidence in his strength of hand and limb, and had had no little experience in effecting escape from prisons, even when surrounded by scores of guards.

But he had scarcely begun his examination of the dungeon, when both were startled by the sound of voices at the door, and the insertion of a key in the lock.

Evaline instantly darted into the darkest corner of the dungeon, hoping that her presence might not be discovered.

Hugh De Lisle prostrated himself upon a heap of straw, with his hands behind and under him, to deceive whoever might enter with the appearance of being bound.

The door was opened and Lord Peter first entered, bearing a great flaming torch, and with him came Lady Matilda, under a mountain of cloak and shawl. Two or three stout women servants came in immediately after them, one of them saying:

"Yes, my lady, I am sure I saw a woman, or some one in a woman's garb rush into the Keep more than two hours ago."

"You dreamed it, Martha," said Lady Matilda, as she cast off her cloak and shawl, that she might gaze about her.

We may as well state that neither Lady Matilda nor Lord Peter were in any humour to retire after parting with Sir Alvick, as has been related, both being very desirous to find Evaline. So while the baronet accompanied Mr. Wharrie, Lady Matilda and her son renewed their search for traces of the fugitive.

They made a close search in every part of the mansion, consuming much time in doing so, but found no evidence of the presence of the persecuted maiden.

Lady Matilda gave out the report that Evaline Ulster had suddenly evinced signs of insanity, and also offered a large reward for her speedy discovery, so that all her women were astir, especially as the young lady was much beloved by them.

All search was in vain, however, until the only

woman in the household who had not already taken part in the search, came forward and addressed Lady Matilda in the library, where she had seated herself, weary and vexed with disappointment.

"What is it, Dame Martha?" asked Lady Matilda.

"I have but just heard, my lady," said Martha, "of the stir in the house, having been asleep; but before I laid down a second time, being woke up by the thunder, I looked from my window. It was dreadful dark to be sure, but the lightning now and then lit up the courtyard. My window faced the keep, my lady, and as it flashed, I saw a woman, I am sure of it, just at the door of the keep—a woman dressed in white. I thought it might be a ghost, my lady."

"Ghost, indeed! I thought you had better sense than to believe in such things."

Dame Martha shook her head, saying:

"I don't know, my lady; but when the next flash came the woman, or whatever it was, was no more to be seen, and must either have gone into the keep or into the ground, for the second flash was not two seconds after the first. I went back to bed, and slept until Childres roused me, and told me there was a great rout about Miss Evaline, who had, they said, gone wild and disappeared, which it is a pity to be so, my lady."

"At least we will go and look in the keep," exclaimed Lady Matilda, "though it appears to be folly to do so. Come, my lord, and you, Martha, Childres, and Janet."

"It rains and blows dreadfully," said one of the servants.

"Get torches and lanterns," commanded Lady Matilda. "A little rain will do us no harm."

"Oh, ah, really not, since my suit of dove-coloured silk and sable velvet is ruined already," remarked Lord Peter, as Lady Matilda's women prepared their mistress for the expedition across the wide courtyard to the keep.

On arriving at the door of the dungeon, they found Hark Varly's sentinel pacing to and fro in no very amiable humour. He gave up the key, however, on being ordered to do so, and Lord Peter unlocked and opened the door, as we said:

"You must have been dreaming, Martha," said Lady Matilda, as she glanced around the cell. "There is no woman here—ah! advance the torch, Lord Peter. There is some one in that corner—a woman too—"

"I am here, Lady Matilda," said Evaline, haughtily, for she saw that concealment was impossible.

"Indeed!" sneered Lady Matilda, while her eyes sparkled with delight, but remembering instantly the false report she had given out, she continued—"Ah, poor child, she must indeed be fearfully mad. The dreadful affliction of her poor grand-uncle Herbert is upon her."

"Poor, dear young lady!" cried the women in chorus. "Madness runs in families, they say."

"Poor child, indeed," said Lady Matilda, in a voice of affected pity. "She has such strange fancies, too. She thinks we are her enemies, poor girl. Come, dear Evaline, my sweet child. This is no place for you."

"No, indeed, it is not, my sweet, dear young lady," cried Dame Martha, advancing towards Evaline.

"Back, Martha! I am not mad. It is false!" exclaimed Evaline, indignantly. "Lady Matilda is my enemy. She hates me—she is deceiving you, Martha. I am as sane as you are."

"Yes, we know that," replied the well-meaning old servant. "But let us return to the mansion, to your room, my dear young lady."

"I will not of my own free will," replied Evaline, firmly. "I tell you, Martha, and all of you, that Lady Matilda is a false and most wicked woman. She desires to force me to marry Lord Peter."

"There, dear child, we know it—we do know it," urged old dame Martha, soothingly. "She shan't be married to Lord Peter—no, indeed—nor to anybody she don't want to marry. So come along, Miss Evaline, and we will talk it all over in your nice room, not in this vile dungeon."

"You are an old simpleton!" exclaimed Evaline, sharply, for it was exceedingly annoying to see how readily Lady Matilda's falsehood was accepted as a truth. "I am not mad nor wild."

"I am afraid we must use force," remarked Lady Matilda, with affected sadness. "We cannot leave her here—"

"Well!" exclaimed one of the women, who had been staring at Hugh De Lisle, and then all around the dungeon. "This person is not Olin Cline."

"Olin Cline? It is a person they call Hugh De Lisle," said Lady Matilda, not so much as deigning to look at him as he lay upon the floor.

Indeed, she had scarcely glanced at him when he was captured in Lord Morton's apartment, and had she done so, she could have seen little of his features, his hat being wet and slouched over his face.

His head was bare now, and his hair brushed back from his forehead, so that every feature of his handsome, noble countenance was in full view, the glare of the torch revealing each lineament with great distinctness.

Lady Matilda, however, had as yet kept her eyes upon her intended victim, Evaline Ulster.

"But I saw Olin Cline thrown into this dungeon, just at sunset," persisted the woman. "I heard he was arrested for murder, too."

Lady Matilda now turned and her eyes met those of Hugh De Lisle, gazing sternly upon her.

"Great heaven!" exclaimed Lady Matilda, sinking right down into a heap, with a sharp cry of fear.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE effect of Perryman's words upon all was not slight. Ross Chaffton uttered a furious oath. The icy calmness of this desperate man had gradually disappeared, since he had declared himself to be the father of Major Hark Varly. His beard seemed to bristle, while his eyes sparkled.

Hungry beasts of prey become greatly excited by the scent of blood, and like them, Ross Chaffton's appearance had changed as he saw new and terrible crimes to be committed ere he could enjoy in security the spoils at which he had aimed.

His short, but athletic form, had seemed to swell and expand from the instant that he was told that Hugh De Lisle was not dead, but a prisoner in Ulster keep.

The intelligence that Lord Morton was also an inmate of Ulster Manor had made his frame nervous and restless. But when he heard that Hugh De Lisle was at liberty, his rage burst forth into a fierce and bitter oath, and he sprang at the throat of the orderly, exclaiming:

"Rascally dog, you set him free! You shall die in his place."

The amazed soldier saw the rush of the highwayman in time to avoid it, and betook himself to his heels, leaving all explanation to be made by others, and cursing the fortune that had led him into Ulster Manor that night.

"How happened it?" demanded Ross Chaffton, confronting Lord Peter, with a fierce air.

"Oh, ah, really you are a very singular person," replied Lord Peter, recoiling only to draw his dagger.—"Why! this is Ross Chaffton!" he added, staring at the highwayman. "I have seen you in London. What are you doing in Ulster Manor? My lady, I advise you to see to your plate and jewels. Sir Alvick, this is—"

"Silence!" cried Chaffton. "Sir Alvick knows very well who I am."

"Ah, as you are in the company of Major Hark Varly, doubtless you are very welcome here," said Lord Peter. "Major Varly, you owe me some slight satisfaction for your impertinent curiosity and assertions as regards my family. I do not know that I am not descending to notice you, but, sir, I think you are an infamous, inquisitive puppy; and at sunrise, I intend to horsewhip you back to Ulsterborough!"

"This is not explaining how Captain De Lisle made his escape," interrupted Hark Varly. "As for you, Lord Peter, say your prayers before you attempt to lay your hands upon me—"

The words were hardly from his lips when Lord Peter dealt him a furious blow, for, as we have said, there was nothing cowardly in the nature of the dandy-lord.

Hark Varly staggered back from the assault, and his sword was in his hand instantly. Ross Chaffton, however, seized the wrist of his son, and whispered:

"Keep your revenge for something better than blows. When you strike, take his coronet."

"We will settle this quarrel elsewhere, Lord Peter," said Hark Varly, as he sheathed his sword, and darted a glance of bitter rage at his adversary.

"I know not," remarked Lord Peter, sharply, "what has come to Sir Alvick Ulster, to allow such fellows to remain under his roof. Here is a paltry attorney whom I have honoured by kicking; here is a noted highwayman and gambling knave; and here is—Major Hark Varly, who may be the son of a duke or of a rag-picker, for all the world knows or cares. Lady Matilda, let us withdraw!"

And, with these words, Lord Peter turned upon his heel and left the room in disgust.

Lady Matilda, however, who seemed to shrink from the fierce eyes of the highwayman, rapidly related all that had passed in the keep.

"At early dawn, let every man in the Manor be set upon instant search," said Ross Chaffton, in a commanding tone.

Lady Matilda gazed upon the speaker in great surprise.

"Will you allow me to tell you, my lady, who Hugh De Lisle is?" asked Ross Chaffton, boldly.

"I would rather you would tell me who you are?" replied Lady Matilda, as boldly, for his familiar manners made her angry.

"One who knows a great deal more of Lady Matilda than she imagines," said the highwayman, with a mocking laugh. "I am Ross Chaffton."

"So I heard you called by Lord Peter, sir. A highwayman, I believe," replied Lady Matilda, scornfully.

"So I am called, my lady. Perhaps the world may know you by a worse name, some day. But then you and Ross Chaffton should be friends, for he does not like Hugh De Lisle, and Hugh De Lisle is Lord Edward Charles, Marquis of Galmount."

Lady Matilda was already very pale from excitement and exhaustion, for the night had been one of terrible and powerful emotions, yet she grew visibly paler as she heard these words.

"I thought it was Hark Varly who claimed to be Edward Charles," she said.

"Oh, and so he does, but that is our affair, my lady. We intend that he shall be Marquis of Galmount, with your consent, too, we hope. But Hugh De Lisle is the true marquis, or you may be very sure that we should care very little about him."

"With my consent! You say you hope to make Hark Varly Marquis of Galmount with my consent!" exclaimed Lady Matilda, amazed by the highwayman's audacity.

"Certainly, unless you desire to be called by that worse name of which I hinted, my lady. Be very sure, it is to your interest as it is to ours that no opposition to our plans comes from Lady Matilda—what shall I call you, my lady, as Lady Aspa lives and is the wife of this gentleman whom you have so long called husband? I suppose the world would call you Marchioness of Galmount."

Lady Matilda, though a strong and bold-hearted woman, could not confront the fierce audacity of the highwayman, especially as she saw Sir Alviok Ulster appeared wholly crushed and speechless with despair.

It was very plain, too, that Ross Chaffton was so sure that Hugh De Lisle was Edward Charles Fitz-Osborn, that he was eager to compass his speedy destruction.

With a shudder of horror Lady Matilda reflected that to protect herself, she would be forced to become an accomplice in the conspiracy by which her son was to be deprived of his title and estate. Ross Chaffton, she saw, was not a man to be readily thrust aside. He was as desperate as he was cunning. He was the head, hand and heart of the plot. Others were connected with him, but he was the great urger of the conspiracy. The man whose will was iron, and whose power was irresistible.

(To be continued.)

MICHEL-DEVER.

CHAPTER LXIII.

THE poor girl wept some bitter tears over this letter, but she soon wiped them away, and gave Nancy such directions for her guidance as were possible in the excited state of her feelings. She ended by saying:

"I must go to this stranger now, or she will be offended at my delay. Do you get ready to leave, and I will find time to write a few lines to Harry, to be taken to him as you pass through the grounds. You will be sure to find him at the usual place. I am hurt at what papa has said to me, Nancy, but I am not disheartened by his opposition. I shall get away from Mrs. Black in spite of her watchfulness."

"When it's done I'll believe it, Miss May. You ain't seen her yet. She's as hard as stone and as sharp as steel."

"I can't stop to talk now, Nancy; remember what I have said, and don't make me despond, when I need all my courage to help me in this strait."

When May entered the parlour, in which Mrs. Black had been left so long alone, she found that lady divested of shawl and bonnet, walking to and fro with the firm tread of a sentinel on duty. She turned round as the light step of the young girl announced her entrance to her sharp ears, and brusquely said:

"My pupil, I suppose. You've kept me waiting some time, Miss Thorne, but as you had your father's letter to read and its contents to digest, I can excuse that. But I wish to say to you, at once, that I will tolerate no disrespect in any shape. I've been used to girls, and I know their ways—I've been sent here to have absolute authority over you, and to be responsible for you; so you must make up your mind to have me always near you. I shall occupy the same room, share all your employments, and never allow you, for any period of time, to be absent from me."

To this unceremonious address, May coldly replied:

"Of course I must submit to the will of my father, madam; but under the circumstances you cannot expect from me a very gracious welcome to Thornhill. At an earlier period of my seclusion, if papa had sent me a companion at all congenial to me, what has so deeply offended him might never have occurred. As things now are, bolts and bars will not eventually hinder me from evading the bondage in which you are commissioned to hold me."

Mrs. Black eyed her through her spectacles, as May uttered a defiance she considered so audacious, and her thin lips unclosed to say:

"Upon my word! rebellion at the outset. I hardly expected so bold an avowal as that from a girl so young as you are; and one, too, who has been guilty of a breach of decorum, which might be ruinous to all her future prospects. I see that you do not understand how much you have risked, in clandestinely making the acquaintance of a stranger, and even allowing him to write and ask Mr. Thorne's consent to your marriage with him. After such an experience as that, no man of delicacy or refinement would ever ask you to be his wife."

"I never intend to listen to such a proposal from any other than Harry Sinclair, and if papa had chosen to satisfy himself of his worth, he would have spared himself the trouble of seeking you for my duenna, and me the annoyance of being dictated to by such a person as you seem to be. The manner in which you addressed me when I came in proves to me that you are not fitted for the position in which my father has chosen to place you. I am helpless, and, to a certain extent, in your power, but I am of the Thorne blood, and that resents and recoils from oppression in every shape."

Mrs. Black frigidly retorted:

"As fiery blood as yours has been tamed by me before now. I shall superintend your studies, and give you so much to do, that you will have no time to dwell on the sentimental folly of which you have been guilty. I am tired and hungry, and wish to accompany you to your room. As I have promised not to lose sight of you, we must, of course, occupy the same apartment. Will you be good enough to lead the way?"

Mrs. Black gathered up her bonnet, shawl, and umbrella, and stalked grimly after her unwilling companion. May felt the uselessness of resistance, though she rebelled in every fibre of her nature against the authority this interloper asserted over her, in the house in which she should have been mistress.

When they reached the suite of rooms appropriated to the daughter of the house, Mrs. Black glanced round approvingly, for Walter Thorne denied May nothing that money could obtain, and they were elegantly and appropriately furnished. A bed-room and sitting-room opened into each other, and in the last were her piano and guitar.

Mrs. Black threw herself into the comfortable easy-chair that was drawn up near an open window, commanding a lovely prospect, and said:

"I am sure if I had such a home as this I should never wish to leave it. The perversity of poor, fallen human nature is wonderful, but I am sorry to see it illustrated in a creature of such tender years as yours, Miss Thorne. I think I shall be perfectly comfortable here, and I shall not risk the loss of such pleasant quarters by any neglect of the duties assigned me. Where is that girl who must have aided you in your late underhand course? I wish to settle with her, and send her about her business."

"Did my father also give you authority to dismiss the servants, Mrs. Black? Nancy is a faithful and industrious girl, and the housekeeper may not be able to fill her place very soon."

"She has no doubt been faithful enough to you, but as her services as a go-between are not desirable, I shall use the power delegated to me to send her away at once. It was well for the housekeeper herself that she notified Mr. Thorne of her illness, and deprecated the idea of leaving you with such a companion as Nancy Bean in your daily walks, or she would have gone after her. I shall not interfere with her in any way, but while she is unable to attend to the house, I shall look after it myself."

"I am to understand then, that for the time you remain, you are to be mistress of the establishment?"

"Precisely; and such a position suits my taste. I have fine administrative abilities, and I am glad of a field in which to exercise them. Is the young person I wish to see in the adjoining room?"

"You will find her there, madam, I believe, if you are not afraid to lose sight of me long enough to speak with her," replied May, drily.

Mrs. Black gave her a sharp glance of disapproval; but she arose, and said:

"I will send her away at once, and then you and

I can come to a better understanding. I shall not tolerate impertinence from a pupil, either in manner or words, and you will find it best to yield gracefully to the authority with which your only parent has clothed me."

She walked into the adjoining apartment, where Nancy was swelling with indignant wrath, at finding herself and her young lady placed at the mercy of this dictatorial woman.

Her brown skirts had no sooner disappeared than May flew to her writing-desk, took from it the package of precious letters written to her by Sinclair, and also a supply of note paper. A carved cabinet stood in one corner of the room, and into a secret drawer, known only to herself, she thrust them, keeping a single sheet of the paper, on which she hurriedly began to write, with a pencil, the note to be sent to her lover.

She had completed but a few sentences when she heard her duenna returning, and therefore thrust the paper under a pile of music, to be taken out and scribbled upon again when an opportunity offered.

Mrs. Black triumphantly said:

"I have settled that matter, and Nancy Bean goes, bag and baggage, within the hour. I have ordered her to have my trunks brought up, and, if you will show me where to put my things, I will unpack and arrange them. I never felt settled till I do that; and I shall be glad to have something to eat, for I have not dined."

"You can issue your own orders, madam, for I never interfere with domestic arrangements. That is Mrs. Benson's province," said May, gravely. "Since you persist in intruding in my chamber, I will show you a wardrobe in which you can put some of your things; but the dressing-table with the drawers is appropriated to my own use."

"There is room enough for another, and I shall have one brought from some of the chambers not in use. Mr. Thorne told me to make such arrangements as would suit my own convenience, and I shall certainly do so."

"I perceive that such is your intention," was the cold reply.

The man was called to bring in the trunks—which were neither heavy, nor very large. With the assistance of Nancy, an old-fashioned bureau was brought from one of the upper rooms, and a place found for it between two of the windows; and Mrs. Black became absorbed in the occupation of arranging her wardrobe in its capacious drawers.

May hastily finished her note, while she was thus employed, and gave her ally her parting injunctions. When she could write unobserved, she promised to do so, and if the opportunity offered, to drop her letters in the hollow of an old tree that stood by the pathway leading into the glen; and Nancy was to make a daily pilgrimage to the spot, to see if anything had been deposited there.

In spite of the stubborn and defiant spirit May had shown towards her new gaoles, she wept bitterly when she parted from the poor girl who had so long been about her person; but Nancy was far too indignant to shed tears. She pressed the hand that clung to hers by her lips and heart, and said:

"Don't you give up, Miss May. I'll do all I can to get you out of this; that old dragon is so blind that if anything happened to her specs, she couldn't tell what you was doing. If I was you I'd break 'em, or get 'em lost a purpose."

"That is a good hint, Nancy, and I may act upon it; good-bye, now, and go at once, so as to give me time to compose myself before my tormenter comes in. I do not choose to let her see how much she has the power to grieve and annoy me."

Nancy tore herself away, leaving her box with her few worldly possessions to be sent after her to Dr. Brandon's, where her mother and brother both lived—the latter as gardener. After her story was told, she believed she would be allowed to remain, until something definite was settled as to her young lady's fate.

In compliance with May's wish, Sinclair called that evening upon the doctor, taking with him several letters on business from men in responsible positions, to prove his claims to consideration. Nancy had already enlisted the sympathies of the benevolent physician, by relating to him the history of her young lady's persecutions; and, although he shook his head disapprovingly over the romantic meetings in the Glen, he was not greatly surprised to learn that May had made every effort to escape from the dreary monotony of her life at Thornhill. If she had given her heart to a worthless scamp, he thought it would be a fitting punishment to her father for his treatment of her, though a very sad thing for the unhappy child herself.

In spite of Nancy's assurances that Mr. Sinclair was a very fine gentleman indeed, Dr. Brandon had many misgivings; but when the young lover called upon him, and frankly told him the whole story of his

acquaintance with May, from its commencement down to that day, he could not refuse either belief or sympathy; but he hesitated about granting assistance to Walter Thorne's daughter to arrange an elopement.

After conversing together long and earnestly, the doctor said:

"I have an old-fashioned prejudice in favour of children submitting to the will of their parents; but in this case the power is so tyrannically used, that I can almost excuse that helpless girl for trying to set it at naught. If her father cared for her or her happiness, I would refuse all aid to you, but he does not; from her infancy May has been an object of indifference to Walter Thorne—the coldness he felt for her unhappy mother extended to her child, unnatural as it seems. Mrs. Thorne had some money which was settled upon her children, and I am afraid that May was shut up at Thornhill, because she would not relinquish the control of it to her father."

"You will not refuse to help us then, Dr. Brandon?" said Sinclair, with eagerness. "If it be the money Mr. Thorne wants, he is welcome to it; all I ask is his daughter. I can support my wife without any aid from her resources, and if May chooses to relinquish her inheritance, she can do so at once; in a few years, I shall be able to make a better settlement upon her, and I will do it."

"I believe you to be thoroughly in earnest, Mr. Sinclair, and I honour your disinterestedness; but the offer to give up May's little fortune, as the price of his consent to her union with you, would not be listened to by her father, after refusing it as cavalierly as he has to you. I do not know what his views for her may be, but I am very sure that he will care little about promoting her happiness. She has thwarted and offended him, and he will seek to punish her for it. I will have nothing to do with an elopement; and, if such a thing be arranged, I wish to know nothing about it; but I will not refuse to take your letters to Thornhill, and find the means of giving them to your betrothed. I go there every day to visit the housekeeper, and I can hold the durna at bay while I talk with her young charge. She will scarcely suspect a grave and reverend seignior like me of playing the part of Mercury between two despairing lovers."

Sinclair grasped his hand, and warmly shook it. "Thank you, doctor. I shall regard you through life as the best friend I have. Only aid me thus far, and I shall rescue my darling before her health and spirits are broken beneath the iron rule under which she has fallen. May is like a delicate flower, which droops in a cold and ungenial atmosphere, and we must remove her as soon as possible from the harsh tyranny of which she has too long been the victim."

"She is delicate, but she has the fire and spirit of her race; and the dragon—as Nancy Bean calls her—will hardly have everything her own way. Miss May Thorne can be an obstinate little spitfire, when she is borne down on too hard. I've seen her as dignified as a princess, small as she is, and again as wayward as a sprite. Don't think that you are winning a meek little bundle of perfection, for May is very far from being that."

"I should not like her half so well if she were," said Sinclair, laughing. "Those insane little women who are afraid to call their souls their own are not to my taste. If May had not been daring, as well as trusting, she would never have written that letter which first interested me in her. When shall you go to Thornhill again, doctor?"

"Early to-morrow morning, so you may have your missive ready."

"Thanks; I will do so. And now I will no longer intrude upon you."

"Of course you will call every day, Mr. Sinclair, and I cordially invite you to come. I must cultivate your acquaintance, that I may honestly plead your cause with Thorne, if the occasion to do so should arise."

"I think you will find employment for all your eloquence, doctor," said Sinclair, with a smile, "and I shall doubtless bore you with my presence oftener than you will care to see me."

The two parted, mutually pleased with each other; and on the following morning, when Dr. Brandon drove to Thornhill, he carried a communication from Sinclair informing May that, on every night for the next week, he would have a carriage in waiting not far from the outer gate of the mansion, and if she could effect her escape, they would fly together and be united, before her father could be warned of her evasion.

CHAPTER LXIV.

DR. BRANDON found his patient rather worse that morning, and in a towering passion. The "new woman," as she called the governess, had taken

her keys away from her, and given orders for all that was to be done, not only in the house, but on the small and productive farm attached to the place. Mrs. Black professed herself familiar with agricultural details, as she was the daughter of a farmer. In housekeeping she was equally skilful, for she had kept her own establishment while her poor dear Black lived, and he declared she excelled all her neighbours in management.

Mrs. Benson was helpless against her encroachments; she had lost her power of locomotion, but her tongue made up in some measure for the inactivity of her other members. She vowed to circumvent the governess in some way, and she set her brains to work to out find the means.

To Dr. Brandon's inquiries, she replied: "I ain't a bit better with all yer comin', doctor. Your prescriptions ain't a mite o' use, and that ere Miss Gander jest does her own way without mindin' my demonstrances. Atween her an' the new woman what's come to make us all stan' round, I shall jest lose my interlectables."

"Mrs. Black would do you good service if she could make you easy on any terms, Mrs. Benson," said the doctor, with his eyes twinkling with amusement. "I am sorry that Mrs. Gandy is despotic, but she is a skilful nurse, and you had better allow her to be with you. If you will keep yourself quiet you will soon be better, I assure you; but excitement is bad for you."

"Keep myself quiet, indeed, when everything is going at sixes and sevens. I can't depose on my bed, an' know what's a goin' on in this house; 'tain't no use for you nor nobody else to tell me to do it."

"You won't be responsible for anything that happens, since the rule has passed into other hands. Be quiet and get well as fast as you can, Mrs. Benson, for I scarcely think the new order of things will outlast your recovery."

"What makes you think that, doctor? If I could b'lieve it I'd be on the condolecing list afore many more days."

"I'll tell you in confidence: report says that Mr. Thorne will soon bring another wife home; and if he does, Mrs. Black's services will be superfluous. Mrs. Thorne can take charge of May, and keep her in order."

"Goin' to be married, an' his wife barely six months in her grave! If it's true, Dr. Brandon, he's a deceiver an' the oreliablest o' men. I has nearly killed myself tryin' to please him, an' now he's goin' to bring somebody here that I'll hate to see wuss than I hate that new woman."

The doctor laughed. "I hope you are not afflicted with the 'green-eyed monster,' Mrs. Benson. That is a state of the case I never suspected before."

"It don't matter what you inspected: of she's a green-eyed monster, what does he want with her? I allers thought he had a eye for good looks."

"So he has, as he will prove to you one of these days; good morning. I must see the new importation and judge of her myself."

Doctor Brandon sent in his name, with a request to be admitted to the sitting-room of Miss Thorne. After some delay he was invited to proceed to it, and on entering, he was presented to the new governess by her disgusted pupil.

There were abundant evidences of the new régime that had been established at Thornhill. The poems and novels that had soled the solitude of May were all removed from the centre table, and in their places were treatises on mental and moral philosophy, and several elementary mathematical works. A black board had been placed over the mirror that hung between the two southern windows, and the priestess of that shrine stood beside it, volubly demonstrating a problem she had chalked upon its surface.

May sat listlessly turning over the leaves of the book she held in her hand, secretly wondering if the gaunt embodiment of learning before her really expected her to make an effort to remember her instructions. She understood enough arithmetic for the common purposes of life, and beyond that she did not care to go.

When the visitor came in, May hastened with alacrity to interrupt what was so wearisome and unintelligible, and as she sprang forward to grasp the hand of her old friend, the important note was adroitly placed in her possession. Then bowing low before Mrs. Black, Doctor Brandon courteously said:

"As an old friend of your pupil, and the family physician for many years, I ventured to ask admittance here, Mrs. Black. I heard of your arrival, and I did not like to leave the house without paying my respects to the stranger within its gates."

Mrs. Black made a stiff bow, and said: "I am glad you have called, Doctor Brandon, for I find that my task here will be no sinecure. My pupil pays no attention to what I explain to her. Her

thoughts seem wandering off into cloudland, and after my most elaborate efforts to make her understand what I have taken every pains to demonstrate, she looks up vaguely and confesses that she knows nothing about it. If you can cure this state of mind, I shall be very glad."

"I promise to do my best, madam; but if you have undertaken mathematics I am afraid I cannot guarantee a cure. My little friend here has had a very desultory training, but as far as it has gone it was good, for her mother was an intelligent and loving guide to her."

"Oh, thank you for that testimonial, dear doctor," said May, impulsively catching his hand and carrying it to her lips.

Mrs. Black looked shocked at this, and severely said:

"Miss Thorne, I expect from you more reticence of manner; such demonstrations are, to say the least, unpleasant."

"Not to me, I assure you," said the doctor, demurely. "May is an impulsive child, and must be dealt with as such, Mrs. Black. If you draw the reins too tight, you know what is apt to be the result, and in her case gentleness will accomplish far more than severity. I hope you will be careful not to overtask her, for she is not very strong."

"It does not matter what tasks I set her; she does not seem inclined to learn any of them," replied the irritated teacher. "She sits as passive as a block when I am explaining a difficulty, and then rouses up to say she did not comprehend. I am afraid I shall have to resort to severe measures with Miss Thorne, to bring her to a proper sense of the duty she owes herself, and the respect that is due to me as her preceptress."

"I see that you are not inclined to listen to my advice, Mrs. Black; but on one point I must be peremptory. In some sense I am responsible for the health of this young lady, for I have been her medical attendant from her birth, and I insist that her outdoor exercise shall not be curtailed. Whether the tasks are accomplished or not, May must take a long walk every day when the weather will permit."

"From all accounts, she has taken too many romantic rambles already," was the significant reply. "I was sent hither by Mr. Thorne to perform the important duty of watching over the mental and moral welfare of his daughter; and, with your permission, I shall pursue the only course that seems judicious to myself. There is a long gallery at the back of the house, and daily exercise can be taken in that. When Miss Thorne goes abroad she will accompany me in the carriage; as I am fond of that species of locomotion, we shall often resort to it."

"That is better than staying within doors all the time, but it will not suffice for one reared as my young friend has been. You will see her fade before your eyes, and grow more listless and inattentive every day. I have warned you of the consequences, madam, and now I will take my leave."

He bowed, turned to May, and as he took her hand, whispered:

"Get on her blind side, my dear, and remember that I am always your friend."

Her eloquent eyes only thanked him, and Doctor Brandon departed, with his mind almost made up to assist in effecting an elopement, that the helpless girl might be rescued from the thralldom in which this stiff martinet of a teacher intended to hold her. But he could not see how it was to be successfully carried out, with such a woman as Mrs. Black always on the watch.

When the door closed on the visitor, that lady sharply said:

"Since you do not appreciate my efforts to enlighten your understanding, Miss Thorne, I will cease to make them for the present, and proceed to another department of my duty. You have kept up a correspondence with that clandestine adorer of yours, no doubt, and I am to get the letters and return them to their writer. Give me the key of your desk, if you please."

"No lady would pry into the private papers of another," said May, flushing with indignation. "My father could not have commanded such an indignity as that."

"I have my orders, and I shall obey them," was the cold response. "Surrender the key, or I shall take it from you."

May remembered the letter Doctor Brandon had given her, and believing the woman before her quite capable of searching her pocket by force, she drew out the key demanded, and throwing it on the table, haughtily said:

"Play the part of the detective, if you wish it, madam, but you will find nothing to reward you for your pains. As to myself, I do not choose to see my papers desecrated, and I will retire into my chamber while you make your inquisition into what does not concern you."



[MRS. BLACK IS SHOCKED.]

"In your present humour, perhaps solitude will be the best thing for you, so you may go," was the reply.

May gladly left her to her unprofitable search, and partially closed the communicating door, leaving a crevice wide enough to enable her to see when Mrs. Black arose from the table on which the desk was placed. She thus gained time for the perusal of Sinclair's letter, which was hastily drawn forth, pressed to her lips, and then eagerly read.

A second time she went over its precious contents, and then a movement in the next room warned her that her freedom from espionage was ended. She hastily thrust the letter into her bosom, and took up a book, trying to assume the cold and impassive expression she chose to wear in the presence of her governess, when it was possible to do so.

Mrs. Black's sallow face was slightly flushed, and her dull eyes sparkled behind her glasses, as she approached and stood over her refractory pupil. She sternly said:

"Where are those letters, Miss Thorne? I must have them, and it is quite useless for you to attempt to withhold them."

"Find them, then," said May, without looking up. "If such things be in existence, I shall not betray to you their hiding-place."

"If! Of course they are in existence, and in your possession. The young man himself stated that he had carried on a correspondence with you, and your father particularly enjoined me to send back his letters, and to demand yours. You must give them up to me; there is no alternative."

"I think there is—I shall try masterly inactivity, but I have no objection to an opposite course of action on your part. There are my keys lying on the stand—you are welcome to use them if you choose. After invading my writing desk, I care comparatively little about having my clothes and ornaments examined."

"Insolent! how dare you speak thus to me?"

May looked up at the flushed face, and replied: "I am the daughter of the master of this house, Mrs. Black, and not a menial to be addressed in such a manner as you presume to assume. I am not afraid of you, and bluster as you will, you will gain from me no clue to what you seek. There are my keys—use them if you see fit, but your search will be as unprofitable as the one you have already made."

Mrs. Black clenched her fingers nervously, as if they tingled to give the speaker a box on the ear, but as castigation was not enjoined by Mr. Thorne among the catalogue of her duties, she was afraid to attempt it. She emphatically said:

"I have had many unmanageable girls to deal

with before to-day, but never have I encountered one as impracticable as you are, young lady. What do you expect to come to, I wonder."

"I expect to come to a state of beatitude by escaping from you and joining my lover," was the malicious reply, intended to exasperate the duenna still farther.

"Good heaven! what a young reprobate the child is! Go back to the sitting-room and resume your studies, while I dive into every secret repository belonging to you. It is my duty and I shall religiously perform it."

"I dare say; religion is often found to be a useful cloak to those who have neither conscience nor sense of propriety."

With this parting thrust, May walked into the next room, arranged her disordered desk, and scribbled a reply to Sinclair, to be transferred to Doctor Brandon on the following morning, if an opportunity were afforded.

She consented to all he proposed, but confessed her inability to find the means of effecting her escape from the Argus eyes that were ever on the watch. At the close of her epistle, she gave him a ludicrous account of the battle she was waging with her new companion, in the forlorn hope that she would become disgusted with the charge she had undertaken, and throw it up.

May had ample time to finish and address her epistle before Mrs. Black's investigations in the bedroom were over. Finding nothing there, she came into the parlour in which, by this time, May was demurely seated, drumming her fingers on her open book, with both her letters securely concealed between the lining and outside folds of her dress.

With a spiteful glance towards her, Mrs. Black walked towards the cabinet, and said:

"I should have looked here first. Of course, this is the most likely place of concealment for what I am determined to find. I wish you would pay more attention to your studies, Miss Thorne. Beating a tattoo like that will hardly assist you to memorise your tasks."

"I am not trying to do so. Like Marius, I am meditating on the ruins of Carthage," and she pointed to a box of dissected maps which Mrs. Black had brought with her to illustrate ancient geography. They had been thrown from the table, and were so much dilapidated by the fall as to be rendered useless.

"Did you do that, Miss Thorne, to release yourself from the necessity of studying those maps?"

"It was an accident," replied May, carelessly, "but I am quite willing to pay you for them."

Mrs. Black looked at her, but said nothing more.

She began to feel that she was getting the worst of it with this young girl, whom she had expected to crush down at once.

The search in the cabinet was as unsuccessful as the one in the chamber had been, and turning to May, the inquisitor sternly asked:

"Is there not a secret drawer in this piece of furniture? They are not often made without one."

"If there be, you can search for it at your leisure, Mrs. Black. I am not the person to apply to for information on the subject."

"If you are not, your father is, and I will write to him to know what you refuse to tell. The letters are here: I am convinced of that; so I shall look no farther. When I hear from Mr. Thorne I can gain possession of them."

"Just as you please; by that time it will be of little consequence to me what is done with them."

"What do you mean by that?"

With a sudden burst of passion, May said:

"I mean that I shall be dead of disgust and ennui at being compelled to support your presence, or I shall be safe with the man who loves me, and can make me happy. I do not care what you write to my father. I will not attempt to master the tasks you have set me. I will not make the slightest effort to please you in any way; for such a low-bred, inquisitive woman I did not believe could be found amongst educated people."

Had a bombshell exploded at her feet, Mrs. Black could scarcely have been more startled than she was by this outburst. She sat several moments mutely regarding her pupil, for she was far too angry to speak.

May did not drop her eyes before that steadfast stare, and an expression was in them which warned the woman that the Thorne spirit was aroused, and it would be well not to deal too harshly with her charge.

After a long pause she coldly said:

"Your opinion is not very flattering, nor expressed in a lady-like manner, but I can afford to disregard it. As to your studies, if you refuse to permit the light of intelligence to be diffused through your imperfectly cultivated mind, it will be your own loss, not mine. I shall set your tasks, and if they are not properly prepared, I shall report your contumacy to your father—he can take whatever course he sees fit. As to myself—I shall strictly perform what I conceive to be my chief duty, and that is, to guard you from every approach on the part of your lover. After the audacious speech you made not long ago, I cannot be too strict in my surveillance."

(To be continued.)



[THE ABDUCTION OF LAURETTA.]

THE FLOWER GIRL.

CHAPTER V.

MASTER CAXTON observed the rapid departure of Sir Simon, and remarked to Lauretta as they moved towards a gate:

"You know something of that young gentleman, then? I saw that you shrank from his offer of escort."

"I know nothing of him, sir, except that I cannot look at him, nor know that he is looking at me, without shuddering."

"Yet he is a great favourite among the great ladies of the court; nor is he unhandsome—brave and well educated, too."

"I only know that I detect him," replied Lauretta, firmly.

"Aye, and you are truly guided by a pure-minded maiden's instinct, my child," exclaimed the master-printer, warmly. "Shun his advances, fear him, recoil from him as you would from a venomous serpent. He has no heart, he is reckless and dissolute. He is daring, cunning, resolute in wickedness. He is insatiate in his vices, young as he is. But for my vigilance he would have carried off one of my daughters. Not with her consent. Oh, no! Thank heaven, William Caxton has reared his daughters to despise villains like Sir Simon Vagram."

"Master Caxton, who is he whom you called 'my lord?'"

"The Earl De Montfort."

"Yes, I heard you so address him as we left him. But what is he to Sir Simon?"

"His father; and no less to be feared by modest maids and matrons than his evil son. Alas! that good men should be forced to consort with such vile natures for the welfare of England. But here we are at the gate."

There were two soldiers, wearing the badges of Lord Roger, standing at the gate as the master-printer advanced with Lauretta on his arm. They had hurried past Caxton as he crossed the green, and he supposed they intended to leave the enclosure upon some affair of their lord.

But when they reached the gate they halted, one on each side of the entrance, and crossed their halberds with the points towards the green; and as William Caxton came up, one said rudely:

"Halt! You cannot pass out without the written order of Lord Roger Vagram, Earl De Montfort."

"See here, my friends," expostulated Caxton, "I have just parted from the earl."

"That does not matter. You cannot pass."

"This is a very strange proceeding," thought Caxton, as he retired. "Ah, I see that every entrance and exit is guarded. Well, we must walk back and obtain a pass from the earl. Alas! that the sword and spear should rule supreme! But the day is coming—far in the future I fear—when a pound of type shall outweigh a ton of swords in the scales of justice and civilisation."

He moved on with slow and dignified step towards the tyrannical noble, who smiled wickedly beneath his grizzled moustache as he saw the master printer turned back by his armed lackeys, but his attention was then demanded by the presence of Lord Stanley and another noble, also mounted.

This Lord Stanley was he whose subsequent desertion of Richard at Bosworth Field caused the overthrow and death of the usurper. Like the earl, Lord Stanley was clad in armour from head to heel, for it was rumoured that Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, had landed on the English coast with a strong force, and was preparing to march against London.

As Lord Stanley was the father-in-law of Henry Tudor, Richard viewed him with much uneasy suspicion, as indeed he did all around him, yet he had no proof that Lord Stanley was disloyal to the house of York.

With Lord Stanley, however, our story has little to do. The noble at his side claims the closer attention of the reader.

This gentleman, though his hair and flowing beard were snowy white, and his noble features pale and wrinkled, was not old from the passage of years. Deep care, sorrow, and profound grief had blanched his hair, bleached his cheek and furrowed his brow, so that his face was that of a man well stricken in years, though he had not attained his fortieth year.

His visor was up, and his countenance of ghostly paleness seemed more pallid from its contrast with his jet-black armour.

As he and Lord Stanley halted near Lord Roger, he fixed his dark and mournful eyes steadily upon those of the earl and bowed his head coldly, saying:

"We heard that you were slain or badly wounded, Cousin De Montfort, and so made haste to the rescue. I am glad to see that you are unhurt, though there is dirt and dust upon your armour."

"Thanks, Sir Albert Tempest," replied the earl, with an uneasy glance towards Lauretta, who was approaching with William Caxton. "I have had an affray with a mob of unruly knaves, and have punished them as they deserve."

"Too severely, Lord Roger. It is a shame that the nobles of England so cruelly use their swords against the people," said Sir Albert, sternly, as his dark eyes kindled with indignation.

"Has not England's soil been saturated with English blood, shed by Englishmen, for thirty years, in the bloody rivalry of York and Lancaster? Surely, my lord, there are widows and orphans enough, without your adding to the number."

"If any man has been slain by my guards, Sir Albert, and I believe a few have been killed, I am not to be chided by you. Lord Stanley, if you desire speech with me, I pray you wait here a moment while I speak with two whom I see approaching."

With these words Lord Roger spurred his horse toward Caxton and Lauretta, muttering:

"What black wind blew Sir Albert forth to-day? He must not see this girl, for though there is no danger that he may recognize her, it is well to be cautious."

"He has a tiger's heart," said Sir Albert to Lord Stanley, as Lord Roger rode off. "Is it not a pity that if I die and leave no heir of my blood my barony must pass to this black-souled Roger Vagram or his libertine son, Sir Simon?"

"Let us pull together, Sir Albert," replied Lord Stanley. "Richard is yet on the throne, and until his crown is on Richmond's head, let there be no dissension among those who hate the usurper."

"That desire alone restrains me, Stanley, for I hate Roger Vagram as I do the vilest reptile."

"And yet, though I cannot say that I like him, Sir Albert, I know not why you speak so bitterly."

"Nor can I tell, my lord. Yet I hate him intensely. Perhaps because I suspect—but I am wrong in saying so, for no one should hate from mere suspicion. Yet I do hate Roger Vagram," he added in a fierce, low tone, as his glance followed the earl.

"Ah," said he quickly, and spurring his horse sharply, "I think that is my friend, Master Caxton. I wish to speak with him of a work I desire to have pass through his press."

"Now, get you gone hastily, Master Caxton," said the earl, who meanwhile had written off an order for the master printer's egress, and whose wary eye saw the rapid approach of Sir Albert. "Away with you, or farther delay may meet you at the gate."

But William Caxton was putting away his pen and ink-bottle, articles he always carried with him, and not being ever in a hurry delayed until, as he turned away, Sir Albert called out loudly:

"Tarry, Master Caxton. I would speak with you."

"Fate wills that they shall meet," muttered Lord Roger, as he resolved to witness all that might happen. "He cannot suspect, and recognition is impossible. Perhaps it is best, for this new delay will give Sir Simon ample time to disguise himself, and call together the needed ruffians."

As Sir Albert rode up, Master Caxton raised his cap and saluted him cordially, saying:

"Ah, Sir Albert, I am both delighted and grieved to see your worship abroad. Delighted, because I believe moping at home adds to your sorrow; and grieved, because I see you in armour. Surely, sir, you do not intend to take the field? Lady Tempest already bends under the calamities of the past. Why add to her cares anxiety for the husband she loves so tenderly?"

"The king has proclaimed that any noble who does not appear in armour this day, and ready to follow his banner to the field, shall be arrested and sent to the Tower," replied Sir Albert, as he shook hands with the master printer. "There is more danger in the dungeons of the Tower than in the field, my old friend."

"True," said Master Caxton, shaking his head. "It is a very unhealthy place for all whom the king has sent thither. I mean no treason by the remark, Sir Albert."

"And if you did, Master Caxton, never fear that Albert Tempest will report it to Richard. But where may I converse with you of a matter of publication?"

"At my office, Sir Albert, or where else your worship may appoint. Now; but that I have a maiden in charge, whom I must hasten to the house."

The baron now looked at Lauretta for the first time. Her fair and beautiful face was upturned, as her splendidly brilliant blue eyes gazed curiously into the pale, yet noble face of the baron. Her hair, jet-black and glossy, fell in massy curls around a brow and neck of dazzling whiteness; her cheeks glowed with the excitement through which she had passed; her faultless lips slightly parted, and revealed her pearly teeth.

Her remarkable beauty alone would have caused the gaze of the nobleman to linger admiringly upon her charming face and graceful form. But more than deep admiration made Sir Albert stare fixedly at her.

She blushed deeply, and her eyelids fell as he gazed. Poor girl, she had been rudely stared at often during that day, and she longed to be by herself in safe seclusion. Yet her heart did not swell with indignation against the pale-faced baron for his boldness of gaze.

He thought thus, however, and, bowing as lowly as if he were addressing some gorgeously-clad lady of the royal court, said:

"Pardon my rudeness, young lady, but your face reminded me of one I have loved these twenty years, and shall love for ever. May I ask your name?"

"Ah, curse the mischance," thought the vigilant earl, setting his teeth hard together. "He sees the resemblance. Or is it chance?"

"My name is Lauretta Mansfield, noble sir," replied the maiden, as her heart sprang to greet the kindness of soul revealed in the gentle tone used by her questioner.

Sir Albert pressed his hand upon his brow as he heard her speak, for her voice, though soft and musical, was remarkably clear and distinct, and her accent that used by ladies of fashion and education, and, moreover, wonderfully resembled that of a lady very dear and near to the baron.

"Lauretta Mansfield!" he repeated, with a sigh. "I will remember the name, young lady; and, if it be proper, I fain would see you again. Do you live in London?"

"No—yes—I do not know. I am going to live in London, noble sir," stammered Lauretta, trembling as her eyes suddenly met the baleful gaze of the dark-faced earl.

"She is a friend of Sir Mortimer Clair, Sir Albert; and I am about to lead her to the house of his mother," said Master Caxton, whispering.

"Then I may see you again, young lady, for I have heard of Sir Mortimer. He is one of nature's noblemen, and I would he were now in London."

"He is. He arrived from across the channel last night, Sir Albert, and I think he has letters from one over the sea for your worship's perusal."

"Bid him be wary, Master Caxton," said the baron. "Is it not so, Lord Roger?"

"His boardship showed his tusks at me not long since," replied the earl, frowning. "I have no doubt that the boar has heard the horn of the hunters."

Lauretta knew that they were speaking of King Richard, who was often called "The Boar," from his crest. But she little knew the formidable, and eventually successful, conspiracy then on foot to hurl the cruel king from his throne.

She wished the interview would end, for her blood

seemed shilly so long as the fierce eyes of Roger Vagram flamed so near her, and she was greatly pleased when the baron said:

"Well, I will not detain you and this young lady, Master Caxton. I will call at your house ere long, and speak of the affair I have in mind. Pray tell the knight. He goes by his title name, I suppose?"

"So I believe, Sir Albert. I think he wore the golden spurs of a knight during the late affray."

"Ah! Then he was in the late affray? I trust no harm befell him. How came it that Sir Mortimer was entangled in the broil?"

"Lord Roger will explain that, I trust, to the satisfaction of all whose lives and fortunes depend upon the success of that which Sir Mortimer has so daringly undertaken," replied Master Caxton, with a rebuking glance at the earl, who frowned, and said, sharply:

"I make no explanation of my resentment at an insult, Master Caxton. If Sir Albert asks it, however, I can readily satisfy him," he added, quickly, for at that moment he saw a party of six men, one in the garb of a jester, enter the green, and a gesture from the latter, who was masked, told him that Sir Simon had made ready for the intended abduction of Lauretta.

"Ride aside with me, Cousin Albert, and I will tell you how this unfortunate affair came about," continued the earl, riding aside.

"In one moment, Lord Roger," said the baron. "Tell Sir Mortimer, Master Caxton, to be exceedingly wary, as the very air is full of treachery, and not to deliver any letters to those to whom they are addressed until he has had speech with me. Let him seek me this night if possible."

"I will deliver your message, Sir Albert. The sun has set and it will soon be dark," said Master Caxton, as he turned towards the nearest gate.

Lauretta supposed that the master-printer referred to the orb of day which had just disappeared, but Master Caxton alluded to the cognizance, emblazoned upon the great banner of the proud house of York, and meant that its power and glory was about to sink for ever from the usurped throne.

She gladly moved away from the presence of the detested earl, though she hoped that she might soon again hear the kind voice of the baron, whose dark and melancholy eyes lingered upon her form until she disappeared from his view amid the people at the gate through which she passed.

Lord Roger waited for the baron to speak, expecting that he would question him concerning the affray, but that desire had faded from Sir Albert's mind, at least for the time. Other and graver thoughts possessed his soul, as his gaze followed that beautiful form, and a tear rolled heavily down his pale cheek while he gazed.

"Thus might my Lottie have looked had cruel fate not snatched her from me," he thought. "And so the other would have grown to be, faultless in form, enchanting in feature, as their mother—alas! as their mother was, ere grief came upon her. Poor Lady Lottie, I cannot weep as you do, dear wife, yet my sorrow is as great. Well, heaven help us both to bear our grief."

"I shall not wait upon his leisure," muttered the haughty earl, anxious to avoid his cousin's eye, not because he feared any inquiry concerning the affray, but because his base and guilty soul ever secretly trembled when the steady, intelligent gaze of the baron was fixed upon his.

He could brave the terrible eye of King Richard, even while his heart was full of treachery against that dangerous and suspicious tyrant, but the injuries which he had plotted and executed against Sir Albert Tempest, and the wrongs he was still doing him, sat heavy upon his soul, not because there was aught of mercy or remorse in his nature, but because he feared detection.

"I will not wait upon his leisure," he thought, and spurred towards Lord Stanley. "Let him learn that, at least."

Then joining Lord Stanley he said:

"Come, my lord, let us seek the king, who seems unusually cold towards me—"

"But, Sir Albert—"

"He will doubtless follow when he awakes from his reverie, my lord. You know he often falls into deep thought, and remains for an hour in the same position. The king wears a frowning face—"

"But should we not rouse Sir Albert, whom, as you say, seems plunged in a reverie, Lord Roger. His sorrows are great, and they prey too much upon his mind."

"It is best to let him have his fill of grief, nor does he like to be aroused. He knows that we are to seek the king, and will soon follow."

"Poor Tempest, he has a noble heart," said Lord Stanley, as he rode away with the impatient earl, leaving the baron seated motionless in his saddle,

with his eyes bent upon the ground, his soul wrapped in thoughts of his blighted hopes in the calamitous past.

But scarcely had the earl and Lord Stanley left the enclosure when Sir Albert raised his eyes and recognized, not many paces distant, one whom he had not seen for many a year.

"Great heaven!" he said, as he spurred his horse forward. "As I live I believe I see Siballa Thornbuck, the accursed sorceress!"

It was not yet dark, though after sunset, and the sorceress, who held little Flaydills in her arms, but who was not seeking to avoid anyone on horseback, was surprised when she recognized Sir Albert Tempest in the rider.

"Woman! What child have you there?" cried the baron, as she fled towards the nearest gate. "Stop her! She is a child stealer!"

But the woman was swift of foot, and as she darted away, screamed some command which was understood by the trained and uncouth bird on her head, for the owl flew at the head of Sir Albert's horse, tearing at the animal's eyes with its claws, and beating it with its broad wings.

The terrified steed reared and plunged, almost unhorsing his rider, and wheeling rushed away at full speed.

When Sir Albert had mastered the animal, which he soon did, the sorceress and her prize had disappeared.

CHAPTER VI.

HAVING quitted the enclosure, William Caxton, with Lauretta upon his arm, quickened his steps from his customary slow pace, and pursued the most direct course which led towards the residence of Madam Clair.

He soon became absorbed in his thoughts, which while high and ambitious, were tempered with a spirit of charity and love for all men. His acute mind, deeply in love with his noble art, looked far to the distant future when illiterate England should blaze amid the galaxy of enlightened and civilized nations, as chief in literature.

"I am not a creator, but a preserver of poetry and prose!" he mused. "Heaven did not endow me with genius, yet of what avail would be genius but for the press, of which, in England, I am the pioneer, the father. The time will be when the printer and his deeds will rule the world. The sword will bow to the pen and the pen will pay homage to the printer. Then will the name of William Caxton be in England like that of Faust or of Gutenberg in Germany."

Lauretta perceiving that her companion was disposed to be silent, said nothing, lest she might break his reverie, and as she knew little of London, permitted her glances to wander on every side, marvelling greatly at all she saw.

Fear of pursuit, too, made her vigilant, and it was not long before she suspected that they were followed, or rather accompanied.

She noticed that on the other side of the street, and almost immediately opposite, a man attired as a jester and surrounded by several rude-looking men, seemed to be pursuing the same course as that taken by William Caxton, and twice observed that the eyes of the party were turned upon her.

There was something in the air and pace of the jester which reminded her of him in green and gold, and she felt a thrill of terror through her heart as the conviction came upon her that she was not yet rid of the evil presence of Sir Simon.

"Master Caxton," she said, "I fear I may seem silly to you—yet I must tell you that for more than twenty minutes I think we have been followed."

"Ah! By whom, my dear lady?" asked Caxton, halting at once, and gazing about.

"By a person in the disguise of a jester, accompanied by several rude-looking men."

"Yes. I see whom you mean. Let us turn down this street to the next corner, then up the next street, and so on right around the square until we are again upon this spot," said Caxton. "Certainly they will not do the same unless they are really following us. That is what we must first learn."

They made a complete circuit of the square, and when they paused again the jester and his party were still immediately opposite.

"Yes, we are followed, young lady," said Caxton, anxiously. "No one would walk completely around a whole square unless they had a special object in view. But let us go on. I will suddenly enter the house of a friend who lives not far ahead, and pass straight through into the street beyond, and then hurry on."

A few moments after he did as he had proposed, and on emerging into the next street was pleased to see no signs of his pursuers.

"Let us hasten on and turn down the next street,"

he said, after a quick survey up and down the street. "No doubt the pretended jester and his comrades are watching the front of my friend's house."

They saw no more of their pursuers until they met them suddenly as they turned a corner.

The street in which they then were was almost deserted, and day was just sinking into night, so that objects were scarcely discernible unless very near.

Caxton and his companion had lost much time in seeking to evade pursuit, and, as it now appeared all in vain.

"Out of the way, upstart," said one of the rufflers, as he jostled Caxton rudely. "Give the wall to your betters."

Old William Caxton was of a quick and passionate nature, and he did not stop to reflect upon the rashness of the act, but slapped the brawler sharply in the face, saying:

"Thy betters, knave, are gaul-birds! Take that for your impertinence."

This was all that was needed for an excuse for a general attack by the jester's party, and in a moment the master printer was grasped by three rufflers and hustled here and there with no little violence, while Lauretta was seized by the others and carried off, despite her sharp cries for help.

Her cries, however, were soon hushed by force, for the jester, being no other than Sir Simon, threw his mantle over her head and face, and tying it tightly there, prevented her voice from being heard.

When William Caxton regained his feet, he was confused and bewildered by the violence with which he had been assailed, and it was several moments before he realized that the rufflers had disappeared, and Lauretta with them.

"What is the matter?" cried several who lived in the neighbouring houses, as they raised their windows and peered forth.

"You ask too late," replied Caxton, bitterly, as he turned to move away, unable to fix upon any direction to pursue. "Had you asked when I first called for aid, you would have had time to prevent the success of the villains."

Just then a door near the spot was opened, and a woman bearing a lighted lantern appeared.

"My good woman," said the master-printer, "pray lend me that lantern for a moment. Perhaps the rascals dropped something which may be of use to me in identifying them."

The woman placed the lantern in his hand, and he began a careful examination of the spot upon which the struggle had taken place.

"Ah!" said he, suddenly, as he picked up a dagger which had fallen from its sheath, and held the richly-carved and jewelled hilt near the lamp. "I am lucky. So, a gentleman's dagger, jewelled, richly ornamented! Ah! and a coat-of-arms and crest etched upon the blade. Come, I am familiar with nearly every escutcheon in England. So—ah! this is the escutcheon of the De Montfort's! Ho! Then it was, doubtless, Sir Simon Vagram, as the young lady feared. Take your lantern, my kind woman, with a thousand thanks for the use of it."

The lantern was still in his hands, and its beams fell broadly upon his honest face, when his arm was grasped and the dagger snatched from his fingers, by some one who immediately ran away.

Pursuit was useless, for it had become very dark, and Master Caxton was not nimble of foot.

"It does not matter," he thought. "I saw and had the dagger, and know its owner."

He then hurried on, hoping to find Sir Mortimer Clair at home. In this hope he was disappointed, for Sir Mortimer had not returned.

"I am sorry that he is away," said Master Caxton to the servant at the door, "as I have business of importance with him. I think I had best wait for a time. He may come home in the meanwhile."

"His mother is within, sir, and very anxious about him and little Mistress Flaydilla," remarked the servant, as she held the door wide open for his entrance.

Master Caxton groaned, for he remembered that while he and Lauretta forced their way through the mob, little Flaydilla was snatched away by a hideous old woman, wearing a crimson-coloured gown, and that but for a sharp blow from his cane, the same woman would have dragged Lauretta away also.

He remembered, too, the shrill and terrified screams of the poor little girl as the old woman tossed her upon her shoulder and fled with her, while the jam and surge of the mob prevented him from aiding her.

"Ah, well, poor lady!" he thought, as he entered a small and exquisitely furnished apartment, after hearing a gentle voice say, "Come in," in reply to his rap, "ah, well, I must tell you all. Good fortune ever attend you, Madam Clair," he added, aloud, as he bowed to the occupant of the room.

Madam Clair, the mother of Sir Mortimer, was a

lady of great beauty of form, and dignity of manners, and, perhaps, had passed, or was passing, her fortieth year. Her robe and mantle, like the garments of her son, were jet-black, as was her costly cap of lace. Her hair, though glossy black where it could be seen, was streaked with silver; and though the beauty and freshness of youth had faded from her perfectly-moulded features, her complexion was still fair, and the expression of her countenance noble and impressive.

She arose from a table at which she was sitting when Master Caxton entered, and saluted him cordially as the friend of her son.

"I hoped that my son was with you, Master Caxton," she said, and looking anxious as she saw that no one accompanied him. "Ah, your face is pale and troubled, Master Caxton, and there is blood and dust upon your cheek!"

"True, but had Sir Mortimer been with me when I was beset, no doubt my face would be clean. A party of rufflers attacked me on my way hither, to place under your charge a beautiful young lady. I was badly treated, and the lady was carried off. There has been a serious affray on Shingly Green, but Sir Mortimer was unhurt, and I hoped to find him here."

The anxiety of Madam Clair increased to trembling agitation as Master Caxton spoke, and when he paused she exclaimed hurriedly:

"The young lady? You mean our little Flaydilla? Ah, there was a mystery connected with the poor child—"

"No, lady, I do not mean poor little Flaydilla, though she too has been snatched away—"

"My poor little girl!" cried Madam Clair, clasping her hands, while tears sprang to her eyes.

"It is very sad, lady," said Master Caxton, in a tone of sympathy. "But let me tell you all, and how it came about."

He then related rapidly all that he had seen, and, as he concluded, a quick, firm stride was heard in the hall, accompanied by another, heavier and slower.

"Ah, it is the step of my son!" said Madam Clair, joyfully, as she hastened towards the door.

It was thrown open ere she could reach it, and Sir Mortimer entered, followed by stout Nicholas Flame.

The knight at once warmly embraced his mother, and then glanced quickly about the room as if expecting to see Lauretta.

"My dear friend," said Master Caxton, shaking his head, "the young lady has been snatched from my care by Sir Simon Vagram and his rufflers. You see what a plight I am in—"

"By Sir Simon! He shall pay for this with his life," exclaimed Sir Mortimer, fiercely. "She must be rescued immediately."

"Who is this young lady, my son?" asked Madam Clair.

"She is the one of whom you have heard me speak so much—Lauretta Mansfield, who was to have been made my wife last January—"

"And who so mysteriously disappeared?"

"The same, mother. I found her to-day, and rescued her from the clutches of a horrible old woman, who by some means—I have not yet learned what—forced Lauretta to appear on Shingly Green as a flower girl. No doubt Master Caxton has told you of the affray. The same horrible old woman carried off Flaydilla."

"Poor child! Her former tyrant was an old woman—"

"This is the same. Little Flaydilla recognized her at the flower-booth before the affray began. She is called Siballa the sorceress."

"Great heaven! that monster!" exclaimed Madam Clair. "Living yet, and in London! Oh, my son, if she suspects that you are the son of your father, your life will be menaced every hour. Why she desires to possess Flaydilla I cannot say, though I am sure that she has some evil design. Heaven grant that she may never suspect that I am in London, or in England, eye, or in the number of the living. Beware of Siballa Thornbuck."

"I will cudgel her bones to jelly," replied Sir Mortimer. "I met her at an early hour this morning for the first time. She had a fortune-teller's booth on Marsham Green, and Nicholas Flame told me who she was."

"Ay, my lady," said the bluff printer. "I recognized the old witch as soon as I laid my eyes on her, and hurried away lest she should see me. But leave it to me to rescue the child, for I have friends in London who will aid me to hunt up the lair of the sorceress."

"Heaven defend me!" sighed Madam Clair, as she sank into a seat. "I fear the sorceress has seen that in the face and form of my son that will raise her suspicions. Perhaps she is already seeking for me."

"Dear mother," said Sir Mortimer as he pressed his lips to the brow of his agitated mother, "I know

that you have told me much of the dreary troubles of your marriage with my unfortunate father, and that this woman, Siballa Thornbuck, had much to do in your misfortune, but remember that you were helpless then. Now you have a son and powerful friends. Do not lose courage because a bloated and villainous woman may attempt to cross your purposes."

"True, my lady," said Nicholas Flame. "Sir Mortimer is right. Why fear a miserable old woman who will some day be whipped at the cart's tail, and then be burned for her dealings with the evil one?"

"It is because I believe that the evil one aids her, that I fear her, good Nicholas. Roger Vagram, too, no doubt had his guilty fears aroused when he saw Sir Mortimer, and therefore ordered his arrest."

"But, mother, Roger Vagram, you have told me, believed that you perished before I was born," remarked Sir Mortimer.

"So he did, and may yet, my son. Had I not been firm in that belief I never would have consented to your visiting London on the business you have in hand for the care of Richmond—"

"Take care!" cried Master Caxton, warningly, and glancing suspiciously around. "Speak not so loud. It said that even the walls have ears to betray to tyrants. And that reminds me, Sir Mortimer, that Sir Albert Tempest bade me warn you not to deliver a letter nor a message to any one, until you had spoken with him. The king suspect the king knows not what, so be careful, for your servants may watch and betray."

"We have but two, Master Caxton, and they have been faithful friends as well as honest servants to my mother from and before my birth. But I will heed the kind warning of Sir Albert and visit him at once. I must visit Roger Vagram too."

"Ay, the earl seemed eager to speak with you," interrupted Master Caxton, "and expressed a warm desire to see Madam Clair."

"To see me?" exclaimed the lady, trembling with a new terror. "Great heaven! I could not look upon the face of Roger Vagram without betraying who I am. Ah, it is plain that he suspects. A heart so evil and guilty throbs in flames of suspicion, and though he must believe that the wife of his victim perished years ago, his evil soul is cunning to imagine danger."

"It is plain, too, to my mind," said Master Caxton, "that the earl desired to have control of the young lady, Mistress Lauretta. Why? I know not. 'Tis said he is no less a ruffian than his libertine son, and as I think of all that has taken place, I do begin to suspect that the earl cunningly delayed my departure from the enclosure to give Sir Simon time to disguise, and kidnap Mistress Lauretta."

"We will waste no more time in vague surmises," exclaimed Sir Mortimer. "Roger Vagram owes me a debt nearly, aye, fully due, and it cannot be paid in aught except his heart's blood. With his son I had no quarrel till this day, and in the vengeance which I desired upon the father I would have spared the son. But since Sir Simon has dared to insult her whom I love, he shall fall with his wicked sire."

"My son, imperil not your life rashly because of this beloved girl," said Madam Clair, passionately. "You are young and impulsive, and she may not be a fit mate for one who may soon have the right to wed among the noblest of England."

"Mother, so far as I know she has no name save that which is engraved upon my heart—Lauretta. She may have sprung from a base or a noble name, but to me she can be no more and no less than Lauretta. I love her, and if she be less pure than my high hopes have painted her, I will be willing to die, for all my dreams of happiness would then be bitter as hers."

"Mortimer, your mother has felt too much woe in having lost him whom she loved, to ever wish or dare to oppose the love of her only child. I have told you that I place implicit faith in your judgment, and that my love for you shall be extended to your betrothed, let her come when she may. But be not rash. Ah, how cool and calm, how prudent and circumspect you are when the lives and hopes of others depend upon your actions. See, how your eye flames, how you tremble, how pale you are, as you think of Lauretta. Remember, my dear child, that perhaps her life, her rescue from worse than death, depends upon your prudence far more than upon your courage. Oh, do not be rash!"

"I will be prudent, mother. And now, good Nicholas Flame, direct all your cunning to aid Mistress Lauretta."

"And the beautiful child, Sir Mortimer? 'Twas but last night that she sat upon my knee, and combed my beard with her dainty, tiny fingers," said the printer, as his bold, honest eyes grew moist.

"I must rescue the fairy from the ogre."

"That, too, Nicholas. But something tells me

that, in seeking for Mistress Lauretta, you will learn something of Flaydilla. My own desires must be laid aside for the demands of my country. I will visit, first, Sir Albert Tempest, and then Roger Vagram—"

"Tread carefully, my lad, when you pace within the walls of his palace," interrupted Nicholas. "Those have gone therein who were never seen to come forth."

"I will be on my guard, good friend, never fear. Master Caxton, will you go with Nicholas Flame a little way, to tell him all you know of the abduction?"

"A little way! Come, what kind of a fellow do you take old William Caxton to be? I am to be with him until we find Miss Lauretta," said the master-printer, heartily. "Say me not nay, my friend. Go I will!"

"Thanks, Master Caxton. I may meet you again ere morning," replied Sir Mortimer, as he conducted his friends to the street.

"I hope you may, Sir Mortimer. Were you with us, I would have no doubt of speedy success. But haste, my young friend, and rid thee of those dangerous letters. Good heavens! he carries that in the lining of his velvet doublet, which, in the hands of the king, would carry many a titled head to the block!" muttered Master Caxton, as he hastened away.

"And yet, my first letter may be delivered to King Richard," thought Sir Mortimer, as he returned to his room.

"Mother," he said, as he prepared to depart upon the execution of the business which had been entrusted to him by Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, "when my letters shall have been delivered, I go to use this key; for, as heaven is above us, I believe it will unlock the chest which hath been the coffin of my father for twenty-three years."

He drew a large and polished key from his bosom as he spoke, and then both he and his mother knelt in solemn prayer.

This concluded, he embraced her, and departed upon his perilous mission.

(To be continued.)

STATUE OF LEOPOLD I.—This statue, which has been "inaugurated" at Antwerp, is in bronze. The king is represented on horseback, with head uncovered and hat in hand, as if saluting the people. The following inscription in French and Flemish appears on two sides of the pedestal:—"The Commerce and People of Antwerp to Leopold, First King of Independent Belgium; voted 1856; erected 1868." The other two sides bear the words spoken by the king in 1856 when on a visit to Antwerp, and his reply in 1881 to the delegates of the National Congress:—"Human destinies offer no task more noble and useful than that of being called to maintain the independence of a nation and to consolidate its liberties."

RED TALE.—There is an odd story of red tale from Russia. In the year 1850, the Emperor Nicholas, looking after the accounts of his household, found an entry something like this: To tallow, for the cure of her Majesty's cold—10 roubles. He was puzzled, knew that the Empress was in perfect health. But on pursuing his inquiries he found the same charge repeated day after day for years and years. He demanded an explanation, and discovered that in the year 1790, the Empress Catherine had had a severe cold; that the physician advised her to apply melted tallow to her Majesty's nasal organ; that there was none in the palace; that it had to be procured for her; and that ever since that date—for more than half a century—there was every day entered in the accounts of the imperial household a charge for tallow to be applied to the imperial nose.

THE SILVER CURRENCY.—More than ten years ago a correspondent, writing on the silver currency, said that if our shillings were piled up, the column would be eighty miles high. The late William Brown, M.P. for South Lancashire, whom the subject interested in connexion with the decimal coinage, was staggered at this. So a gentleman in the Bank of England made a more accurate reckoning, and trumped our correspondent's conclusion by a result of 87½ miles. Had the shillings been quite new, the pile would have been 116½ miles high. The 87½ was got from the worn coin in ordinary use. New shillings have fifteen to the inch; the average in actual circulation have from nineteen to twenty. When they come down to twenty-one to the inch, the Mint sends them to the melting-pot. Many persons were not—perhaps are not—aware that our silver pieces are not coins; they are promises to pay, like bank notes; only they are so near the promise in value that actual imitations would not yield a sufficient profit. The Mint undertakes to pay a

sovereign for twenty of them, no matter how much worn, just as the Bank will give five sovereigns for a note, no matter how much stained or crumpled. So those who think it a hardship that a deduction should be made for light gold, when none is made for light silver, may see their error. If any still hold out, and wish the gold and silver to be placed on the same footing, there is reason to think that the Mint will consent to make a reduction for light silver, and to pay, one shilling with another, at the rate of ninepence in gold for each shilling returned.

PRECIOUS STONES.

COLOUR is never so commercially valuable as in precious stones. For instance, the ruby, the sapphire, and the Oriental topaz are identically the same so far as the materials of which they are composed go, but they differ in value immensely. The ruby is, in fact, the same thing as a red sapphire, but the first-mentioned jewel is the most precious of stones, whilst the blue sapphire is not of any great value. Of old, all blue stones were called sapphires, and extraordinary virtues were attributed to them. In these days we go to the analytic chemist when we wish to discover if there is any poison in a drink, but our forefathers imagined that Nature took the place of science, and attributed to this gem the power of discovering the presence of noxious matter in any liquid in which they may have been placed. The ancients believed that these precious gems changed colour on being brought in contact with poisonous matters, and that they even had the power of killing spiders, which in past times were considered poisonous. The sapphire is very easily imitated, and there are many sham jewels that are passed off as the real thing. Indeed, we do not doubt that this is the case with many so-called jewels which we see on fair necks, and never dream of doubting. The Oriental emerald is an exceedingly rare jewel, and so is the Oriental amethyst. These, like the ruby and the sapphire, are varieties of the corundum, the Indian name by which they are known.

The reader may not be so well acquainted with what is termed the cat's-eye jewel; it has the reputation of being a very lucky stone, and it is sold sometimes for very large prices in consequence of this supposed quality, for there is nothing very beautiful in its appearance to recommend it. The ancients, who had not arrived at the modern perfection in jewel-cutting, were in the habit of engraving their jewels, and Mr. King, in his volume on precious gems, has given us some very beautiful examples of this art. The emerald is principally found in New Granada, but many are also found in Salzburg and Siberia, principally in limestone rock. This gem is a great favourite with Mahometans; chiefly, we suppose, from the colour. The Orientals believe it possesses marvellous powers of a very diverse nature; for instance, it is considered capable of endowing the men with courage and the women with chastity; it is supposed to possess many medicinal qualities as well, but it is not necessary to mention them. The beryl is composed of the same material as the emerald, with the exception of its colouring matter. This can scarcely be called a precious stone, as it is found in large quantities. We are told, indeed, that a mass weighing five tons was found in America. It is used in Birmingham, under the name of aqua marina, in making cheap jewellery.

Rock-crystal is one of many valuable minerals which belong in the quartz system. It is very generally distributed over the globe in large crystals. Lumps of this mineral, often weighing many hundred-weights, are found; and it is used rather in the manufacture of articles of vertu than of gems for the adornment of the person. We meet with it in old goldsmith's work, and curious cups and goblets are made out of it, which are often most delicately cut. Like some of the gems, it was supposed by the ancients to flush with colour when poison was poured into cups made from it. Indeed, crystal has always been supposed to possess magical properties. We all have heard, for instance, of Doctor Dee's Crystal Globe, upon looking into which, it is said, he foretold events. The Japanese and Chinese use it largely, and, among other purposes, as a refrigerator to cool the hands. A ball of this material may be seen in the shop window of an establishment in Regent-street, where Japanese nicknacks are exposed to view. The cairngorm, onyx, cornelian, amethyst, sardonyx, agate, and chalcedony, all belong to the same quartz system at the rock-crystal. The opal, the most delicate of gems, depends for its beauty very much upon the temperature: its rainbow-like tints—or rather, we should say, its iridescent flashes, like those on the breast of a pigeon—are always the most brilliant in warm weather; this fact should teach the wearer that it should be worn as a summer gem only. There are several kinds of opals, the most valuable being known

as the noble opal; then there is a more deeply and evenly tinted red opal; and the Mexican opal, which loses much of its lustre upon being exposed to water. Thus it will be seen this jewel is very sensitive to atmospheric effects, and possibly this is the reason why it has been supposed to possess some supernatural gift. The opal is unique in one respect, it cannot be imitated with any success. This jewel, when large, is very valuable; there is one in the museum at Vienna valued at thirty thousand pounds.

STATISTICS.

A YEAR'S WILLS.—In the year 1867, in which 471,102 persons died in England and Wales (probably half of them minors, and about half the others women), 37,497 probates of wills or grants of letters of administration were issued, 14,623 in London, and 22,874 in the English and Welsh provincial registries. The number is, of course, ever increasing. The increase in 1867 over 1866 was only 285, but 1867 was a year of lower mortality than 1866. The personal property of these 37,497 deceased persons was sworn under 92,302,570*l.*,—viz., 54,111,975*l.* in the cases disposed of in the London Court of Probate, or registry, and 38,190,595*l.* in the cases in the country registries. In the year 1866 the property happened to be rather larger, reaching 93,184,794*l.* The sums under which the property was sworn in 1867 were equal to 196*l.* for every death in the year, reckoning the deaths of men, women, and children.

DIVORCES.—The judicial statistics of England show that in the year 1867 224 petitions for dissolution of marriage were presented to the Divorce Court—a number rather above the average of the ten years during which that court has been open. The petitions for a judicial separation were 70 in number, and that also is above the average. But the causes tried in 1867—viz., 159—were fewer than the average, and so was the number of decrees made. Since the establishment of the Divorce Court in 1858, and down to the end of 1867, it had pronounced 1,279 decrees for dissolution of marriage—namely, 24 in 1858, 117 in 1859, 103 in 1860, 196 in 1861, 123 in 1862, 134 in 1863, 168 in 1864, 179 in 1865, 116 in 1866, 119 in 1867. In the same period the court pronounced 213 decrees for judicial separation of man and wife. The average of the last nine years has been 139 marriages dissolved in a year, and 21 judicial separations decreed. The number of marriages in England in the nine years has averaged about 175,000 a year.

POST-OFFICE FACTS.—The Postmaster-General's report for 1866, which has just been issued, without any date—not an unnatural omission when the issue has been deferred until the report for 1867 is due—contains facts worth recording, notwithstanding the delay. The number of letters delivered in the United Kingdom in 1866 is stated, in round numbers, at 750,000,000, an increase of 4 per cent., over the number in the preceding year. This gives an average of 24 letters to each person, 141 to each house; in England 30 letters to each person, in Scotland 22, in Ireland 10. The number of book packets, newspapers, and pattern packets delivered by post in the United Kingdom in 1866 advanced to 101,784,185, an increase of 3.29 per cent. over the number in the previous year. Money orders were issued in 1866 for 18,847,643*l.*, an increase of 5.71 per cent.—viz., of 5.57 per cent. in England, 6.62 per cent. in Scotland, 6.39 per cent. in Ireland. The depositors in post-office savings' banks at the end of the year 1866 were 754,258, an increase of 23 per cent. over the preceding year—24 per cent. in England, 13 per cent. in Scotland, 16 per cent. in Ireland. The balance due to depositors, 8,121,175*l.*, showed an increase of 24 per cent.—25 per cent. in England, 11 per cent. in Scotland, 8 per cent. in Ireland. The total number of depositors in post-office savings' banks and the old savings' banks—2,156,290, or 1 to every 14 persons—showed an increase of 77,944. The number of policies of insurance effected with the Government through the post-office increased from 560 at the close of 1865 to 1,150 at the close of 1866; the amount insured, from 41,734*l.* to 86,593*l.* The number of immediate annuities from 94 to 283; the amount, from 2,236*l.* a year to 6,427*l.* The number of deferred annuities, from 54 to 107.

FROM Sydney it is mentioned that large quantities of oxide of mercury have been discovered near Oudgeong.

It is curious that the rates for postage of letters were cheaper in 1635 than in 1835. At that time they were as follows:—2*d.* for eighty miles; 4*d.* for 140 miles; 6*d.* for any longer distance in England; and 8*d.* for transit from London to Scotland. Till our penny-post system was established in 1839-40, we had to pay 7*d.* for a letter from London to Oxford or Cambridge.



[A DIFFICULT PROBLEM.]

A HOLE IN THE POCKET.

NEVER did a man get a better wife than Charles Porter, when he led Clara Haskell to the altar, and had her name changed to Mrs. Clara Porter. She was pretty, as everybody acknowledged; and that she was good all felt certain who knew her in any degree. Left an orphan at an early age—or, at least, deprived of the fostering care of a father—she had learned to work for her own support. Her father had been an easy, generous, free-hearted man, making considerable money, but spending it as fast as he made it. When he built his house he was forced to raise a portion of the money to pay for the same upon a mortgage on the property. About one-half the value of the estate was raised in this way; but he promised himself that he should very soon pay that off. The amount of the debt was in two notes, of seven hundred and fifty pounds each. From his salary he found it very easy to pay the annual interest; but years passed on, and he paid not a pound towards redeeming the principal.

"Don't worry," he said to his wife, when she reminded him of his neglect. "I shall save something another year."

And when she sought to point out to him how he might save, he told her that she must not fret him. She knew nothing about business. If she had his business on her hands, she would find it not quite so easy to save money "these hard times" as it was to talk about it. And he died, with that mortgage upon the only piece of property he had to leave to his wife and child.

So Clara understood, at a very early age, what evils might result from improvidence, and how money could leak away from a man who had a hole in his pocket, which he would not suffer his wife to mend. And under the burden of the evil resulting therefrom

her youthful days were passed; for her mother was not strong, and she had to do much towards sustaining her.

Clara knew that Charles Porter was just such another easy, free-hearted, social, careless man as her father had been; but he was good, true, and temperate; and she loved him dearly; she knew that he loved her with his whole heart; and she would have married him had she known that he would rest upon her for support.

Charles was a machinist by trade, and when he was married he held the position of tool-repairer in an extensive clock and watch manufactory—a position of much responsibility, and one which yielded him good pay—ten shillings per day, with extra pay for overwork. Surely he ought to lay up something from this. And he determined that he would.

"Charles, we ought to have a house of our own," said his little wife, after they had been married a month.

"How shall I build a house without money?" queried the young husband.

"I have the land," said Clara, "and you can easily raise money to build a house. When it is built, and it has become our home, you will have an object for which to save. You will never lay up money until you have an incentive of that kind."

Charles Porter knew his own weakness; and he felt that his wife was a far better business agent than himself; and he finally consented that the thing should be done.

Clara's father had left his house, with nearly two acres of land; and when the widow came to sell in order to get rid of the mortgage, she was able to reserve one acre of this land; and this had come, unencumbered, into Clara's possession.

It was a beautiful spot, near the centre of the village, and when Charles began to look around he found that he could easily build a very good and pretty

house without money of his own. He got a friend, by way of return of favour, to draw up plans and specifications for such a house as he wanted; and he found a builder who said he would furnish materials and erect such a house for a thousand pounds, and a man who was willing to lend a thousand pounds for a term of years at six per cent. interest, the notes to be secured by a mortgage upon the house and land; and he would advance the money by instalments, as it might be needed for paying the workmen.

Before the snows of another winter came, Charles and Clara were in their own house; and a better, a prettier, or a more convenient one was not to be found in the town. And then it was so prettily furnished—and nearly all the furniture paid for. During the summer Charles had done a great deal of overwork, and had saved enough, together with what he had before, to buy his carpets and furniture.

All settled down in their home; the surroundings cleared, and the walks smoothed off; the notes settled and the builder's claims satisfied; and then Charles lay back in his easy chair, and smoked his cigar in peace.

Four months slipped away, and New Year's Day came.

"How much have you got laid up towards the first note?" asked Clara, as they sat together, in the evening, in their cosy sitting-room.

Charles blushed, and moved uneasily in his chair. Four months; and he had not saved a pound. Figures were to him most treacherous things. He could do nothing with them.

"I declare, Clara," he answered, after a deal of reflection, as though he were trying to think whether he had any surplus on hand, or not, "I haven't been able to save anything yet. You know everything is high; and then the coming into a new house, with so many little things to purchase—it takes away the money."

"What extra things have we had, Charley, since we got fairly settled down here?"

"Why—there is—is—there are a good many things. You know we put new curtains up in the parlour last week."

Now those new curtains—three of them—had cost just one pound each. Clara had made them, and put them up. And Clara knew that on the very day of the putting up of those curtains, Charles had paid two pounds for a new meerscham pipe! But she did not mention this.

She had asked him at the time if he needed it; and when he had told her how much comfort he should derive from it, she had asked him if he would not take a more rational comfort in paying for his house; whereupon he had remarked to her that two pounds was a very small sum, considering the money he could earn; and that he would pay for the house all the same.

Clara was a wife of a thousand. She knew that the meerscham pipe was but a multiplicand, and that the endless whims of a moment, born of fancy, and carried out upon the impulse that gave them birth, were the multipliers. And yet she knew that she could not make him understand it. She knew that the very goodness and nobleness of soul in him which she had loved so dearly, was the source of all the trouble, and until his eyes could be opened by some convulsion that should shake him into other senses, it would be useless to criticise and point out to him his errors. Even now he was anxious; for he knew his faults; and he felt that Clara knew them; and he feared that she was going to give him a regular lecture.

Oh! wives, husbands, parents, beware of these harassing lectures! More good-hearted, naturally honest and truthful people have been driven thereby to deception and falsehood than by any other cause. And, furthermore, the man who has a weakness is always tender on that point. It is a law of nature. And a probing of that weakness, a cold and calculating baring of the spot to scrutiny and censure, is not healthy for the patient. Advise, counsel, instruct, as much as you please, if you can find a fitting opportunity, and there is a probability that good will result; but beware how you drag up your companion's faults to the light, and hold them up for him to gaze upon them. If he be a sensible man, with a kind and tender heart, it will wound him, and give him pain; and you should be able to judge how much good can follow.

Clara Porter knew all this, and upon that knowledge she acted.

"Let's see,—when does the first six months' interest become due?" she asked, after the information she had received touching the enormous outlay for parlour curtains.

"It becomes due on the last day of February, of course. I tell you, Clara," with a grasp at the opportunity for refuge, "that it is something for a working man to make up."

"I know it, my love," replied Clara, putting an arm

around her husband's neck, and kissing him; "but we'll be as economical as we can, and see how much we can save in the year to come."

"Aye, my darling! that we will!" cried Charley, the sunlight streaming in as the heavy tear rolled away.

He must be a weak man who could dwell under such a fear; and yet they are some of the noblest of heaven's creatures who have just that weakness! Great-hearted, loving men, who never knew a use for money but to purchase comfort for themselves and for their loved ones. A selfish emotion never found birth in Porter's bosom. What he spent for his own comfort and pleasure, he would have spent for another with equal freedom.

Clara knew that her husband had no money saved upon this first day of January, and she watched to see how he would get on with the interest. The first day of March came, and Charles Porter paid the man who held the mortgage; and he had not borrowed a pound. He had saved it all in two months! He had had a point before him that must be reached, and he had reached it.

Clara saw it, and she went out and bought a little blank book and a pencil, and in that book she opened a new account—such an account as she had never thought she could keep, and such as she believed no wife ever kept before.

During the two months Charles had really performed the work of two men, and had received the pay therefore; and it was natural that there should be a little slackening; but he was by no means an idle man, and very soon he was ready for all the overwork that required his attention. The weeks passed on, but no money saved. New novels, pictures, cigars, ale, oysters, horse-hire, a superabundance of clothing, and, beside all this, he bought many useless things simply because he got them "very cheap."

"Charles, let us look over our bills for the past six months. I have them all here."

"Certainly."

Charles threw his cigar into the fire, and sat down. Clara had the bills all filed—the butcher's, the grocer's, and the milkman's—and upon adding the whole up and dividing by the number of weeks, it appeared that the expenses of living averaged two pounds ten per week.

"Now I should like to do the marketing myself."

"You!" cried Charles, in amazement.

"Yes,—I should like the exercise out of doors, the fresh air, and the variety; besides, I can tell better what we want for dinner towards the middle of the forenoon, than I can when you go away in the morning."

Charles Porter had always done all the purchasing, simply because he would not have his wife troubled with it. He did not like it. And when he was satisfied that the little woman was in earnest, he was pleased to turn the care and duty over into her hands.

"You see the figures," said the wife, after the first part of the arrangement had been made; "and now I have been thinking this: If you will give me three pounds a week—put the money into my hands every Saturday morning—I will purchase everything necessary for household use, except the fuel, pay all my own expenses—furnish my own clothing, and all I require. That will leave you to purchase coal and wood, clothe yourself, and look out for your outstanding bills."

Charles was greatly relieved. Many times he had stood in the shops in a state of utter bewilderment, not knowing what to send home for dinner; and the result had been, that he had bought much more than was really needed; and more than could be used. And how much better his dinners were, and how much more he relished them. Before, he had known just what was to be served up, and he was tasting it in his fancy half the day; but now he knew nothing about it until the covers were removed, and his meal came fresh and pleasing.

Every Saturday Charles counted out the three pounds; and when he remembered how well he lived, and how well his friends were served when he invited them to dinner, he did not wonder that Clara came to him occasionally for an extra five pound note. And then the little wife has joined a "Female Benevolent Society," and he had once in a while to hand over a pound for the funds of that institution. Once he questioned the propriety of such an investment.

"Oh, Charles," pleaded his wife, almost tearfully, "if you knew how worthy the object is we wish to aid."

And he could say no more.

The months passed on; another year came around; months rolled on as before; and yet another year; and Charles Porter kept the interest paid, and that was all.

"I declare," he said, one evening, after he had given Clara a five-pound note for which she had

pleaded, "I don't see where my money goes to. Last week I earned just—just—"

"Well—how much, Charles?"

"Ten pounds! I meant to have taken you for a ride; but I declare—"

"Call this the ride, Charley," broke in Clara, holding out the bank-note. "I'll do more good with this than the ride could have done us."

And that was all right.

Not long after this—say two or three weeks—Clara found her husband at the little sitting-room desk one evening, figuring away very intently upon a piece of paper.

She watched him some time before he was aware of her presence. He had a small column of figures set down, and he was now scratching his head, and sighing deeply, as though posed by a problem which set his powers of computation at defiance. Presently she moved the door, coughed, and he quickly crumpled up the paper and threw it into one of the pigeon-holes. She asked him what he had been doing; he declared that he had been doing nothing, only thinking; and then he changed the subject.

Later in the evening, when Charles had gone out, Clara went to the desk, and found the piece of paper upon which her husband had been writing. She looked it over, and found it to be a very simple memorandum.

He had written the word "sundries," but had carried out no amount. Clara smiled, and put the paper away in her bosom.

Clara Porter often pointed out to her husband wherein he might retrench; but he could not see the use.

"What's the saving of a pound amount to? It's of no use. I can't do it."

"But, Charles, if you had commenced four years ago—"

"Fahaw! Don't, Clara! I'd rather take comfort as I go."

But this was not true. He said it because he did not wish to be troubled. His weakness had become so apparent to him now, that he could feel it, together with all its evil consequences; and so much had he lost, that he was fairly beginning to lose heart. But this loss of heart was not a gradual development. Clara would not have suffered that. It showed itself about the time of the interest on his notes. He came home on Thursday evening, thoughtful and taciturn, and he would not tell his wife what was the matter. On Friday he tried to be cheerful; but failed. On Saturday morning, however, he made a clean breast of it. He did it because he was obliged to do so. He called for his wife to sit down by his side; and after considerable effort he commenced:

"Clara, don't put me to the necessity of saying much. I can't do it. Don't for heaven's sake, make me suffer more than I do now."

"Charles!" The wife was frightened. Her husband was pale; his lips quivered; his eyes were wet; and his whole frame shook.

"Don't be alarmed, Clara. If heaven gives me health and strength, you shall never know what it is to want! But my own darling, we must sell this house. You won't make me talk long? Let me tell it all at once and have done with it. You know the bills were due three years ago. Mr. Hodskins knew that this was a good property, and one that would be steadily increasing in value. He foreclosed so soon as the last note was due; but he laughed when he did it, and told me that he only took that step so that there might be no trouble, in case I should take a notion to sell to another party—to sell the place subject to the mortgage. I didn't tell you of it, darling, because I thought it would—"

"Did you think I was ignorant of that, Charles?"

"Eh? Did you know it?"

"Of course I did."

"Then you've been a brave and a noble little woman. But, Clara you must understand one thing; you are not to lose. The place will bring in more than enough to pay you for your land."

"And we must sell our home?" said Clara.

The words were spoken kindly. She meant them so; and for that very reason they cut the poor man to the very centre of his aching heart.

"Oh, darling, I can't help it! Heaven knows how—"

The wife leaped to her feet.

"You shall not suffer. I will not keep you in suspense. You shall not sell your house—you shall keep it."

"Keep it—how?"

"By paying off the mortgage."

"Ah! but the money?"

"You have the money, my own dear husband; and every pound of it you have earned with your own hands."

"Clara!"

"As you said to me, so now say I unto you. Don't put me to much speech, but listen."

And she took a small book from her pocket, and went on:

"Four years ago, and a little more, you placed in my hands the whole business of furnishing provisions and other household requisites, and you allowed me three pounds per week for that purpose. Charles, I had a prime object in view. I knew your weakness, and that it was so much a part of your nature that no amount of lecturing on my part could cure you. I had the whole life-time of my poor father before me for an example. I knew what his resolutions were, and how he had failed. But I felt sure, if I could once act for you and place the result in your hands, you would after that do better for yourself. Your entire disregard and almost reckless carelessness in money matters afforded me ample opportunity. Now look. In the first place, I have saved upon an average one pound a week; and I know we have lived as well as we did before. Then from the various sums which you have given me extra, and which I told you were for a benevolent purpose, I have saved for the one whom I had undertaken to help, two pounds. Do you remember that I once found you very intently engaged over a mathematical problem? It was almost two years ago. I came in one evening, and you were at the desk. Here, this is the paper you were writing upon!"

And she took a scrap from her book, and handed it to him.

"Ah! I remember. Yes, yes—I had missed some money. I cannot call to mind how much, but I remember very well the circumstance. I was sure I had not lost any, as I very often did—aye, as I used to do much too often. I thought I must have lost it; and yet I know it was not an absolute impossibility that I had spent it."

"I knew what you were doing, Charles; and even then I was aware that you were being robbed. I knew that one of your friends was systematically picking your pocket!"

"Clara, what do you mean?"

"I mean just what I say, my dear husband. I could have then pointed out the person who was doing it; and I knew that you were so very, very negligent and careless—that you were so in the habit of regarding all money in your pocket as something to be got rid of as quickly as possible—that you would never know for a certainty whether you had been robbed, or not."

"You know it, Clara, and did not tell me!"

"But, Charles, I know, if you did not have that money by you, you would not spend it, nor, what was equally a bad habit with you—lend it. I knew you never ran in debt for useless things. An empty purse I knew to be a bar to such purchases."

"Clara!"

"Ah—you begin to see! Well, well,—I did it, my husband; and for just the reason I have told you. I had marked your way of managing for two years, and I saw plainly what must be done. You could not save; I must! Yes,—I kept a close watch upon your purse, and upon your tongue, seeking to discover in various little ways, when you were ignorant of the exact state of your finances, and then I would pick your pocket; and when I tell you that I have taken on an average, one pound per week, you will acknowledge that your monetary system must have been very lax. One pound a week for four years, amounts to two hundred pounds. Here is the money, Charles; and now—"

There wasn't much more said that would have been intelligible to a listener; but if any spirits from another sphere chanced to be wandering that way, they must have beheld a scene that made them think there were a few spots yet on earth that were warmed by heavenly beams.

Charles Porter went and astounded Mr. Hodskins by paying him, and taking up his mortgage. And as he returned homeward he carried his head erect; buoyed up not more by joy than by good resolutions. And we may say that his resolutions were kept. After so long a time he allowed that his wife's stitches might hold fast, and he wore, that hole through his pocket never again. S. C. J.

WASTED FLOWERS.—On one of the velvet banks of a rivulet sat a rosy child. Her lap was filled with flowers, and a garland of rosebuds was twined around her neck. Her face was radiant as the sunshine that fell upon it; and her voice was as clear as that of the birds that warbled at her side. The little stream went singing on, and with each gush of its music the child lifted a flower in its dimpled hand—with a merry laugh, threw it upon its surface. In her gloe she forgot that her treasures were growing less, and with the swift motion of childhood she flung them upon the sparkling tide till every bud and blossom had disappeared. Then, seeing her loss, she sprang upon her feet, and burst into tears, calling aloud to the stream, "Bring back my flowers!"

But the stream danced along regardless of her tears; and as it bore the blossoming burden away, her words came in a taunting echo along its reedy margin. And, long after, amid the wailing of the breeze, and the stifled burst of childish grief, was heard the fruitless cry, "Bring back my flowers!" Merry maiden, who art idly wasting the precious moments so bountifully bestowed upon thee, observe this thoughtless child, an emblem of thyself. Each moment is a perfumed flower. Let its fragrance be dispensed in blessings all around thee, and ascend as sweet incense to its benevolent Giver. Else, when thou hast carelessly flung them from thee, and seest them receding on the swift waters of Time, thou wilt cry, in tones more sorrowful than those of the child, "Bring back my flowers!" And the only answer will be an echo from the shadowy past, "Bring back, bring back my flowers!"

FLORIAN.

CHAPTER VII.

THE night was calm and clear, and the moon, sailing in mid-heaven, cast a silvery lustre over the wild scene. With quick, sure steps Corinna threaded a narrow path that wound among detached masses of rock, until she reached a secluded nook where an arched vault had been scooped out from the face of a perpendicular cliff. There were well-defined shelves within and without this vaulted niche, which seemed fashioned on purpose for seats; and in some spots a soft, velvety lichen had accumulated until the rude benches had become covered as with cushions. As the youth stepped upon the table which formed the floor to this natural portico, he beheld a female sitting within the shadow of the overhanging roof; whereupon he stopped and suffered his guide to go on in advance; but not, however, until he had recognised Electa. He heard the maiden exclaim that she had begun to fear something had gone wrong; and he knew that Corinna explained to her the cause of the delay. Then there were words spoken which he did not hear; and finally Corinna turned and beckoned for him to approach.

"Sir Florian," she said, "I leave you with Electa. She will herself tell you why she has sought this interview. Be discreet, and remember that above the starry host of heaven there is One from whom your interview cannot be hidden!"

And with these words Corinna turned and glided away from their sight.

"Aye," cried our hero, advancing to the maiden's side, "the God of Heaven looks down upon us, and from the uttermost depths of my heart I invite His gaze!"

"O, Florian," returned Electa, extending her hand as she spoke, "if I had not known you were kind and true I could not have come hither to meet you."

There was so much of calm and tranquil trustfulness—so much of frank and heartfelt friendship—and so much of rational esteem and confidence in the maiden's speech and manner—in the extending of her hand, and in the steady light of her lustrous eyes, that Florian was placed at once at his ease, feeling the blissful assurance that she trusted him with her whole heart.

Taking upon herself the part of hostess, Electa invited the young man to a seat, and when he had complied, she seated herself by his side.

"It was difficult," she said, "very difficult for me to bring myself to take this step; but when I remembered what I had at stake—when I remembered that far, far more than life depended upon the friendship of a true and honourable man in this hour—I could not hesitate long."

"Electa—may I call you by that name?"

"Ah!" returned the beautiful girl, looking up with a sweet, happy smile, "there is heavenly music in the name, when I hear it thus upon the lips of one at whose hands I can lay a sister's claim. Yes—call me Electa."

"Electa," the youth repeated, not seeking to conceal his admiration, "let me in one short sentence make answer to your claim; and I do it in no spirit of gallantry—in no spirit of pomp and pride; but I do it from a depth of affection—from a sentiment of fond devotion—which is as deep and pure as is the celestial light which gleams upon us from the many eyes of heaven. Lay your commands upon me—make known your wish—and, to the extent of my power, I will serve you. I hold my life valuable on earth only for the good I may accomplish; and if even that were required in your service, it should be freely given. What can I say more?"

Florian knew that his face had told the story of his love, and he knew, too, that the passion had not been concealed in his speech. Had he gone too far? Would such abrupt betrayal of his love startle the

maiden and cause her to shrink from him? Such were the thoughts that suggested themselves to his mind, and with much trepidation he watched for the result. Earnestly the maiden gazed into his face while he spoke, and when he had concluded her hand had stolen upon his arm, and bright tears were in her eyes.

"Oh!" she murmured, looking up through the rich moisture that was gathering into glittering drops upon the drooping silken lashes, "surely heaven has given to me a friend and a brother!"

She paused and cast her eyes downwards in solemn thought; and when she looked up again there was an earnest expression upon her beautiful face which would seem to imply that her reflections had been of a sober and practical character. She placed her hand once more upon her companion's arm, and in tones calm and sincere, continued:

"I accept your proffered friendship, and in doing so I must inform you why I have thus presumed to call upon you and thus dared to trust you. You will listen?"

"If you knew how like celestial music your voice sounded in my ears, you would speak with the assurance that each word was a blessed note touching the chords of my soul with potent and blissful power."

So answered the youth; and the maiden, with brighter gleams of joy in her face, proceeded:

"Once, when my heart was heavy and sad, and when I was oppressed by a yearning after a better home than had ever been mine to enjoy, I met a stranger upon the mountain's side. I saw him but for a few brief moments; yet his frank and generous face, so full of all that I had ever pictured as characteristic of true and noble manhood, was so fixed in my memory that I bore it with me from that time. By day I wondered if I should ever behold that face again; at eventide I prayed that heaven would some time give me a friend like him; and at night that face came to me in my dreams—came always with a kind and smiling look—to keep alive the sweet memory in my soul. Oftentimes I acknowledged to myself that I was very foolish, but yet I cherished the hope that I should see him again."

"And so the time passed on. At length it was told to me that a stranger had sought our chieftain, and offered himself as a member of our band. They said he was young, and that he demanded such trial as is put upon those who aspire to command. When they told me this, my heart bounded with a mighty throbbing, for the thought came, that it might be he whom I had so long expected. I came forth and watched, and when I saw the man who bore the chieftain company, I raised my eyes upwards, and thanked heaven! Oh! I cannot tell you the feelings that possessed me after that. At length I met him in the cavern, and spoke to him words of caution; and my heart thrilled with delight when I saw that he looked upon me with friendly emotion. After that Corinna told me that Florian had been led to seek a place in Bayard's band because of my presence there,—that he would not have come if I had not been here. When I heard this, and had brought myself to believe it, I was hopeful beyond all the hopes that ever beamed upon me before. And now, Florian, you know why I have sought you."

With the instinct of a love which was pure and chaste, and which felt itself reciprocated, Florian placed his hand upon Electa's shoulder, and gently drew her head to his bosom. She made no sign of resistance, but accepted the resting-place as though it were an ark of safety, which was to be hers for all the coming time.

"Electa," said the youth, gazing down into the upturned face, with a look of fond devotion, "let us understand one another at the outset. Corinna told you truly. From the time when I met you on the mountain's side I have borne your image next my heart, and have prayed continually that I might be permitted to see you again. Later events have disclosed to me that those whom I had been taught to regard as my parents were really of no kin with me; but that I was a nameless waif, without a clue to the author of my being. I had long regarded the situation of my native land with feelings of bitter repugnance, and when I discovered that no mortal tie bound me to the ruling power in Sicily, I resolved to throw off the yoke, and seek some place where I could bare my hand against the tyrant. And here let me say to you,—I have more at heart than Bayard dreams of. It is my plan to make the robber band entirely and wholly a friendly aid to the down-trodden people of our island. If I can do that, I shall be content to bear all the odium that can attach to me through my association with the banditti."

"But, after all, this was the second thought. My heart was first turned to the mountain by the memory of the sweet, entrancing vision I had so long desired to see again."

"And you are not sorry you came?" murmured Electa, as Florian came to a pause.

"Not yet, Electa; and it is for you to decide whether sorrow shall ever come. I told you we ought to understand one another at the outset; and now I frankly confess, dear lady, that on all the earth I love but you alone. If you will accept the heart I offer you, and give me your love in return, I will be unto you a devoted husband, and every aim of life, while reason lasts, shall bear your good as its chief object. What answer can you give me?"

Electa reached up and rested her hand upon her companion's shoulder, and nestling more closely to his bosom, she softly, sweetly said:

"In all the world I ask no other resting-place than this. If you will love me, and take me to your embrace, as worthy to share with you in all the affairs of life, I will be yours while I live—yours with all my heart—loving, faithful, and true to the end."

A flood of holy, rapturous joy overwhelmed them, and there, in that grand old mountain cathedral, with only the ear of the Omniscient One to hear, they pledged their troth, and pledged the vows which were to unite them in those solemn, sacred bonds which earth hath no power to sunder!

Sweet and refreshing to them were the words of love which followed, and for a long time they remained locked in each other's arms, revelling in this new language of the soul which had music in its utterance such as had never blessed their senses before. As confidently as rests the child upon the bosom of its mother did Electa repose within the embrace of her lover, every instinct of her nature giving her fond assurance that she had found a true love united with an honour stern and incorruptible.

When the first surge of enrapturing emotion had passed, and the lovers had come down from the heaven of loving transport, Florian was the first to tell the story of his life. He told to the maiden how he had been reared as the child of the proud Senator of Syracuse; how he had enjoyed every advantage that unbounded wealth could bestow; how, at the age of only nineteen years, he had been admitted as an officer in the royal guards; how he had learned, from seeing and understanding the tyranny which was exercised over the conquered island, to hate and despise the Roman power, (for, though the emperor held his court in the Eastern capital, yet it was the Roman Empire which he governed), and how he had long yearned to see the people arise and throw off the yoke. Then he told of the discovery that Bozaria was not his father, and of his vain attempts to learn who his parents really were; and after that he recounted how he had resolved to cast off the hated, galling allegiance, and seek among the mountains one whom he hoped would fill the aching void in his heart, and at the same time, if possible, place his hand upon a power which might in time be brought to bear against the enemies of Sicily.

Electa listened to his story with eager interest, often interrupting him with questions, and offering remarks which betrayed a good knowledge of the affairs of government.

"And now," she said, when he had concluded, "I am sure you would like to hear the story of my poor life. I can tell it in a very few words, for there is little else to tell than you have already seen and heard."

"Tell it as you please, Electa; only be sure you speak to a willing ear. There is music in your voice dearest—a music new and strange to my ear."

"As there is music to me when you speak, dear Florian."

Our hero drew the lovely girl upon his bosom, and having imprinted a chaste kiss upon her lips, he bade her proceed, which she did as follows:

"In truth, dear Florian, when I come to put my thoughts to the work, I find but a sorry stock of information to give you. My earliest recollection—the earliest that I can call clearly to mind—is of being with Thalia, and of coming with her to the mountains. Thalia says I am her child, and she furthermore declared that Timon is my father; but there was a time when my home was not with the banditti; for I remember very well how frightened I was when Thalia first brought me to this wild and rugged home; and, moreover, I have an impression lingering in the memory of those early times of another home, where there were pretty things in the house, and where there were flowers and fruit in the garden; but it is so very dim and indistinct that I can make nothing of it. I remember, however, when I came to live with outlaws, and there I had my first knowledge of Timon. Thalia explained it to me by saying that she did not live with her husband during the first two or three years of my life. He was constantly moving from place to place, so he found his wife a comfortable home in the city until I should have become old enough, and strong enough, to take care of myself."

"From that time I have had a home with the ban-

ditti, and until within the past two years I had no occasion for much regret. There were times when my soul yearned for a different companionship; but the rough men of the band all loved me, and my slightest wish touching comforts for myself they held to be law unto them. It was my nature to love those who were kind and good to me, and so I loved these bold outlaws. And then there was something in the wild and adventurous life that had its peculiar charms; and, being of a mind to find pleasure and comfort while I possibly could, I did not allow my longings after a better class of companions to make me miserable.

"At length, however, the shadow of a calamity fell across my path. My mother told me that Bayard loved me, and that he would, in time, make me his wife. At first I thought not much of this; and it was not long thereafter that I saw you; and from that hour I began to dread the love of the chieftain. Both my father and my mother (I call them so, Florian; but it is hard for me to believe that I owe my existence to them),—they both declared that I should become his wife, and thenceforth they shaped their plans to that end. The more I thought of Bayard, the more I thought of the handsome stranger I had seen in the mountain-path, until I began to believe that between me and the unknown, whose image I so fondly cherished, there was a mystic bond which at some time should be revealed.

"The rest, dear Florian, you can guess. How my parents have urged me; and how the dark chieftain has sought to win my love; and how I have shrunk from him with fear and trembling; and how I would have fled from the evil influence if I had had even one friend elsewhere to whom I could look for aid and sympathy,—all this you can guess; and how your coming has affected me, you know full well."

"But tell me, Electa, has there not, at some time or other, been a passage of love between Bayard and Corinna?"

"Yes," replied the maiden; "and it was that which was the strongest among the first objections I had to the union. I know that Corinna had loved him—that she loves him now; and I know that he has professed to love her. The best part of her life she has given to him, anticipating his every wish which she could gratify, and ever ready to sacrifice her own comfort for his passing pleasure;—all this she has done, being to him truly a wife in all but the name, and now he would cast her off for a younger love. Oh! I think it is very wicked! Poor Corinna! She is a good woman, Florian, and deserves a better fate. And perhaps, if I can get away from here, the chieftain may take her back to his heart."

There were many questions in our hero's mind, and among them:

"How did you, Electa, when Thalia brought you to the mountains?"

"I must have been very near three years old."

"And is there, among the scenes of the earlier days, any particular picture impressed upon your mind?"

"Yes," said Electa, quickly. "There is one which I can call to mind very plainly, and I am sure it is a thing of reality. I was in a beautiful garden, where there were orange trees, and ripe oranges upon the ground; and where there were many fine figures of white marble; and where the flowers grew in rich abundance. First I stood by the side of a fountain—and it seems as though I could see that fountain now, because, I suppose, the peculiar character of the outlet stirred my wonder. There was a marble basin, broad and deep, and in the centre was a little boy, holding in his arms a fish, and from the mouth of this fish the water issued; and I wondered where the water came from. I remembered that I stepped down one of the marble steps towards the water, and that a woman came and pulled me away. Then I went to where the flowers grow, and picked my hand with a thorn, whereupon the woman came again, and shook me, and told me if I did not stop crying she would sew up my mouth with a needle. I can remember very well how this frightened me, and how I crept away, and stifled my sobs. There was a man in the garden with the woman, and I think the woman was Thalia; and I have thought that the man was Timon. I know that I did not love the woman."

"And," queried Florian, "if it were Thalia, have you loved her since?"

"No. I have never felt for her that love which a child should feel for its mother."

Florian was upon the point of speaking farther when a light, quick footfall startled them, and presently Corinna made her appearance.

"Come, Electa—it will be unsafe for you to remain here longer. The day is close at hand."

"The day!" repeated Florian, starting to his feet.

"Have I been here so long?"

"More hours than you think, Sir Florian. "But if you make haste now all may be well."

True to his honour, the youth obeyed their kind friend without a thought of complaint. He took Electa's hand, and pressed it to his lips, and consigning her to the care of the good angels until they should meet again, he turned and hurried back towards the cavern, feeling sure that any arrangements for the future could be made through Corinna.

CHAPTER VIII.

FLORIAN had not more than an hour for sleep; but even that so far refreshed him that he arose feeling far better than did the majority of the outlaws. The first to greet him was Bayard. The chieftain was civil, and tried to appear friendly; but in spite of his efforts there was a cloud which would not be driven from his brow. The youth noticed it, and he wondered whether his captain thought of the conflict of the previous day, or whether the intrusive thought lay nearer to his heart. Perhaps he gathered trouble from both sources. But Florian had no disposition to borrow anxiety. He gave no sign of having noticed the coldness, but went on as though the confidence between them was firm and unbroken.

"To-day," said the youth, "I go to Syracuse. Is it so?"

This allusion to business brought a brighter look in to the chieftain's face, and as he proceeded to discuss the matter of the emperor's embassy the cloud entirely vanished. It was arranged that the young lieutenant should depart upon his mission as quickly as possible.

As Florian approached the breakfast table he encountered Corinna, who whispered to him that she wished to speak with him as soon as possible after the meal was concluded. Wondering what could be the matter, and suspecting, from the woman's look, that something had happened amiss, he sat in haste, and when he arose from the board, he went directly out from the cavern, Corinna soon joining him beyond a mass of detached rock that lay piled up not far from the entrance.

"What is it, Corinna?" asked our hero, eagerly.

"Be not alarmed," returned the woman, entreatingly. "I would only put you on your guard. There may be danger, though I do not apprehend it. I think you and Electa were watched last night."

"Ha! By whom?"

"By Thalia, if at all. As I returned from Electa's apartment, after having accompanied her in from the place of your meeting, I saw Thalia coming down therefrom. I tell you this so that you may be prepared, should you be questioned concerning your whereabouts during the two or three hours next after midnight. But I do not think you will be questioned. Remember that Thalia will not have Bayard know of this if she can possibly avoid it, and to this end she will be very likely to keep it from her husband. But you must bear in mind that you are likely to be most narrowly watched hereafter. We must all be on our guard; for should the chieftain suspect, there is no telling what the result might be."

Florian thanked her for her information, and promised to govern himself as she had suggested, after which he returned to the cave, where he met a woman whom he had not before seen, and who, he felt sure, was none other than Thalia. She was a woman not far from forty years of age; short and plump, with a round, smooth face; her hair black, and untouched by frost; her eyes small and brilliant, like the eyes of a snake, their light possessing a piercing quality, before which a strong man might falter. She would have been called handsome by some, but her beauty, if awarded, lay in the roundness and plumpness of face, and its ruddy hue of health, rather than in the carving of individual features. Her brow was very low and narrow; the nose was broad and flat; while the mouth, looking pretty when wreathed in smiles, was flanked by a pair of thick, sensual lips.

Florian met this woman near the entrance, and with the kindest smile he could summon, and in the most gallant manner imaginable, he raised his cap and saluted her. He knew that this must be the putative mother of Electa, and the impulse seized him to try and propitiate her by smiles, for he was well enough acquainted with human nature and with its development in outward signs, to discover at a glance that this person was not only fond of flattery, but was easily impressed and influenced. She had evidently determined to meet the young man with a frown, for the cloud was already upon her contracted brow, and her lips had been tightly compressed; but there was something in the sweet genial smile of the handsome youth, something so unusual and long-forgotten in that wild retreat, that she could not pass it coldly by. For an instant her cause of vengeance seemed overcome by the graceful salutation, and she inclined her head with a smile as he approached; and when he had passed she turned and gazed after him. At the entrance she met Corinna.

"By my life!" she muttered, seeming at first not to have observed the proximity of the stewardess, "Electa must be kept out of his way."

"Aye," spoke Corinna; "I have thought the same."

Thalia stopped with a slight start, and looked into the speaker's face.

"Corinna," she said, with a strong touch of accusation in her tone, "have you not already seen them together?"

"Aye," replied the other, quickly and frankly; "and hence have I thought what I said. They met last night—and strangely enough, too. The young man told me this morning how it was, and at the same time he was eager to know who the maiden was—what was her name—who were her parents,—in short, he wished to know all about her. I simply told him that if he wished to make a deadly enemy of our chieftain, he would seek to know more of Electa; but if he desired to remain in safety here, he had better think of her no more. He was bitterly disappointed at this; but after a little reflection, he concluded to keep clear of the threatened danger."

Thalia questioned Corinna considerably beyond this, and in the end she went away with the conviction that no harm had yet been done; and if she looked well to affairs in the future, all yet might be well. And to the desired end she was resolved that Electa should become the wife of Bayard as soon as possible. It had been arranged that she should be married when she was nineteen years of age. She had reached that age, and there was no reason why there should be any longer delay.

Between Florian and Bayard, there was need of but little conference touching the business of robbing the Constantinopolitan embassy. The whole matter had been given into our hero's hands, and he must carry it out as best he could.

"All," said the chieftain, "we want is the gold and precious stones they propose to carry with them. I understand they take with them much wealth in jewels."

"Yes," responded Florian. "If Tiberius cannot obtain gold he will accept precious stones; and I opine that rare and costly jewels suit him best. When he gets gold he must expend at least a portion of it in the course of supporting his throne; but the jewels he can heap up in his coffers, and there feast his eyes upon them. I have it from one who has been in his employ, in the capacity of scribe and accountant, that he sometimes sits for hours at a time and toys with the rare and costly gems that have come into his possession. But he will get none by this return, if I can prevent it. My conscience will not trouble me an atom. Tiberius is himself a robber; and those whom he robs can ill afford to lose the money, which they have earned by sweat and toil. I only ask, Bayard, that if I succeed in obtaining a goodly sum, a portion thereof shall be returned to the poor and needy ones who have been forced to pay a tribute, every denarius of which has cost them much hard labour."

"Have no trouble on that account, Florian. If it pleases you so to do, you shall yourself distribute one third of the full amount among the poor of Syracuse. Such has been my custom."

With this assurance our hero entered upon the work with a good heart; and he had now only to choose his disguise and be off.

"Corinna will help you in this latter work," said the chieftain. "She has served me and understands it. If you can contrive to gain her good will, you will find her a valuable friend. But you must be careful. She has changed of late, and at times is so moody and cross that I doubt if she would serve anybody."

The youth said he would do all he could to enlist the woman's kindlier feelings; and so saying he went away to find her.

Corinna led the applicant to the place where the articles of masquerade were kept; and on the way she told him what had passed between herself and Thalia.

"So," she observed, in conclusion, "we have nothing of definite danger to fear at present. The future holds in store all that we have to guard against, and we shall only show our own weakness if we suffer ourselves to be betrayed."

Arrived at the grot where the articles were stowed of which they were in quest, Florian made choice of the garb of an Arabian dervish. He had several reasons for selecting this character. He believed he could sustain it better than any other that would afford sufficient disguise; dervishes from Egypt and Arabia frequently sojourned at Syracuse; they were seldom, if ever, interfered with by the city guards; and, more than all else, they found ready admittance into the houses of the wealthy and noble, where they broke bread and left the return of a blessing.

When the garments had been put on, Corinna applied the pencil to his face, throwing a darker line over all the exposed skin, and drawing in a few dexterously applied and shaded lines upon the brow, about the corners of the eyes, and around the mouth, that served to add the sum of, at least, a score and a half more of years to his age. When the finishing touch had been put on, Florian regarded the reflection upon the surface of a highly-polished mirror, but he never could have believed it to be himself had not the mirror been in his own hands and he alone gazing upon it. Thus disguised, he armed himself with a short, stout dagger, and taking a serviceable staff in his hand, he presented himself to the chieftain.

"Good!" cried Bayard, when he had assured himself that he was really speaking with Florian. "You possess one accomplishment which is as valuable as it is rare, and that is: the art of acting the character you please to assume. I think you may consider yourself safe."

The chieftain went himself to conduct the youth to the place where he had met the two robbers on the morning of his arrival, and Florian was surprised upon finding that the distance was very short. It was a strangely blind way, there being two or three places where one unacquainted with the passage would certainly have stopped and turned back, deeming it impossible that there could be any foothold or practicable path beyond. The chieftain smiled upon observing his companion's wondering look, for he at once divined its cause.

"The path has grown short since you travelled, it last!" he said.

"Wonderfully so," replied Florian.

"Because," pursued Bayard, "your conductors on that occasion led you by a very different route. You can comprehend their motive?"

"Readily."

"But you would have no difficulty now in finding your way back?"

"I think not."

"There are other paths upon the mountain side leading from the vale to our retreat, and one of them is shorter than this; and at some future time you shall be made acquainted with them; but, for the present, this passage will serve you very well. I shall look for you to-morrow."

"If you do not see me on the morrow," said Florian, "you may know that business has detained me, for be assured that no danger can befall me, unless—"

"Unless what?" demanded Bayard, as our hero hesitated.

"Unless some one of our own band should betray me."

"Ha! And think you there is danger of that?"

"I spoke not of danger."

"I simply presented the only contingency under which danger would be likely to come. I am not looking for it, I assure you."

"Let him who would betray you beware of Bayard's vengeance. But fear not, I can guess the direction of your thoughts. The man has been touched upon a sore and tender spot; but he will not descend to the disgraceful depth of seeking covert vengeance. No, no; so go your way without farther thought in that direction."

With rapid strides Florian descended the mountain, and when he arrived upon the plain he pursued his course more leisurely. The distance from the foot of the mountain to the city was not more than five leagues, and by the time the sun had reached its meridian height he had passed the western gate, and was within the walls of Syracuse.

At the gate he met two officers whom he knew very well, and the sentinel who stood guard there was one who had often been drilled by himself. His first feeling was of fear, for how could it be that those whom he knew so well, and who had seen him every day almost to the present time, should fail to recognize him? But when he began to remember the reflection he had seen upon the mirror, his fears vanished; and as he pursued his way, receiving respectful and distant salutation from friends of every degree, his assurance was strengthened, and he went on entirely at his ease.

He had entered the broad square of Dionysius, and was hesitating to consider what course he should pursue, when he observed his bosom friend and confidant, Orlando, approaching. His first thought was to turn aside and avoid the meeting; but upon reflection he resolved to test his disguise to the utmost, and when Orlando came up he addressed him:

"My son, can you tell me if the imperial embassy is yet in the city?"

"Aye, that it is," answered the young officer, quickly. "And," he added, with a bitter curl of the lip, "it is likely to remain while there is an ounce of copper wanting to fill up the measure of the Emperor's demand!"

"I know none of the embassy, my son; but I am seeking a passage to Constantinople, and I thought I might gain opportunity to go with them."

"Do you carry much gold upon your person, good father?"

"Neither gold nor silver, my son."

"Then you need not fear to trust yourself with this band of Romans. The minister in charge is named Claudius, and I think you will find him at the house of the Senator Charon, who is another Roman, though long a resident in Syracuse."

"Can you direct me to Charon's house?"

"I can direct you on your way thither, good father. You observe where the sun will set when evening comes?"

"Yes."

"Charon's house is in that direction, and very near to the city wall. His garden, in fact, is bounded upon one side by the wall, which is a great saving to him, seeing that he does not have to keep it in repair. Any of the artisans or shopkeepers on the way will give you farther directions, so you will not be at fault."

"And your name, my son—may I know to whom I am indebted?"

"Never mind. I fear I have let my tongue wag too freely to add my name. You are welcome to the information I have given, and I will furthermore add, that you will be likely to find Claudius at Charon's house at any time within three days to come."

With this Orlando made a respectful salutation, and hurried away.

"Well, well," said our hero to himself, as he watched his old companion out of sight, "if Orlando recognizes me not, surely I have nothing to fear; so I will face old Charon without dread or alarm."

(To be continued.)

ONLY A CLERK.

CECILIE HORNER was tall and brilliant, with deep hazel eyes, cheeks crimsoned with happy excitement, and heavy coils of shining brown hair, shot through and through with arrows of dead gold, tipped with jewels.

Mary Horner, her quiet little cousin, was as different from Cecile as light from darkness. She was slight and small, with big blue eyes that had all the wondering innocence of a baby's in their azure light; hair of a reddish gold, and a complexion pure and delicate as a pink japonica. Nor did her dress compare with Cecile's. It was a plain white muslin, scattered all over with knots of blue ribbon, and a simple blue ribbon was all that adorned her glossy, luxuriant tresses. Mary Horner was poor; and all these graceful adjuncts to woman's beauty cost money!

"Oh, mamma, it was perfectly delightful at the party to-night!" ejaculated Cecile, enthusiastically. "Everybody was there. Mr. St. John was there, and asked me to polka twice!"

"Did he?" questioned the gratified mamma. "I hope you invited him to call?"

"Of course I did. Mrs. Emmons says he is very rich. Such diamonds as he wears, mamma! But Matie's the favourite with him, I think!"

Cecile turned round, and shook her finger with affectionate archness at blushing little Mary.

"Don't, Cecile," pleaded Mary, as if every drop of blood in her cheeks was turning to fire. "It's all your fancy."

"Is it? Then what are you blushing celestial rosy red for? However, I mean to marry him if I can catch him—I always did fancy black eyes and hair like a—what's its name's wing? And then he's rich, and I'm determined to have a rich husband."

Mary Horner grew red and pale—opened her rosebud lips and shut them again without speaking. How wrong it seemed for any one to talk in that manner of Talbot St. John, when she only dared to think of him as a hero shrined afar off in the height of chivalrous romance!

Mrs. Horner only laughed, however—she was quite accustomed to Cecile's reckless chatter. Nevertheless, she discerned through the light froth of words the under-current of a definite resolve on her daughter's part. Cecile did like Talbot St. John, and she was quite in earnest when she said that she meant to marry him.

"It's two o'clock and after, girls," she said, with a prodigious yawn. "Go to bed, or you'll both be as pale as ghosts to-morrow."

The girls went, and both of them, girl-fashion, dreamed of Talbot St. John. While that gentleman himself dreamed of only one.

The bright winter sunshine was sparkling over the newly-fallen snow like a great universal alchemist, who dealt only in powdered diamonds of the very first water—the sky was blue with the

dazzling, wonderful blueness that you only see when the thermometer is close down to zero, and Talbot St. John, guiding his blood-horses down the crowded thoroughfare, felt the thorough enjoyment of living that makes life the sweetest of all luxuries.

"Hallo!"

He reined up with an abruptness that brought the smoking horses on their haunches.

"Grant Wyman! old fellow! come for a drive! It's the luckiest thing that I happened to meet you!"

The pale, worn-looking young man, carrying a bundle under his arm, stopped—the hectic glow mounted to his cheek.

"Mr. St. John!"

Poor fellow! how keenly he felt his own shabbiness at that moment, as the dashing young man leaned from his stylish turn-out, with cordial extended hand.

"Come—in with you, and we'll take a turn or two in the Park."

"I cannot, Talbot—my time is not my own."

"Not your own? What do you mean?"

"Perhaps you have forgotten—perhaps you have not heard," said Wyman, speaking hurriedly and confusedly, "that we are very much reduced. I—I am a clerk in a trimming shop."

"The deuce you are? and what then?"

"You never were worldly, Talbot," said the young man, smiling sadly; "you don't argue, like the rest of the world, that our social disparity—"

"Social humbug!" ejaculated Talbot, impatiently jerking the reins. "Jump in, Grant—my horses won't stand!"

"It is quite impossible, Talbot; my employer—"

"You're as pale as a sheet—blanched, just like a stick of celery. Where is your place?"

Wyman felt himself crimsoning again as he named an obscure street, where "cheap goods" were sold at cheap rates.

"We'll drive there!"

Grant Wyman found himself, he scarce knew how, costily established among the red velvet cushions by his friend's side, while St. John called out to the ousted servant to meet them at the address his friend had so reluctantly named. Johnson stared superciliously.

"Well, if I ain't hevery bit as good as a shop-boy!" he muttered between his teeth. "But Mr. St. John was always hoddier than Dick's 'at-band!"

"What are you going to do with me, Talbot?" asked Wyman, as his friend drew up in front of the tawdrily-dressed windows of the second-rate trimming shop.

"I'm going to send you to the Park for a drive—you look as if you were in the first stages of a galloping consumption."

Wyman smiled sadly.

"You are very kind, but it is quite impossible, Talbot."

Yet St. John knew, by the very tones of his voice how the poor young man yearned after that forbidden draught of sunshine, exhilarating air, and delicious arrowy motion. He made no answer, but threw the reins to Johnson and walked boldly into the shop.

"Quite out of the question, sir—quite," said the hook-nosed proprietor of poor Grant Wyman's time. "Couldn't spare one of our young men, not if Queen Victoria was to come here after him—it's entirely against the rules."

Talbot St. John spoke to him in a low voice. He was accustomed to have his own way, and intended to make no exception in this instance. And the proprietor's face brightened in the gleam of golden reasons.

"Certainly, sir, by all means. If Mr. Wyman wishes to be absent an hour or two—"

"Hold your tongue!" interrupted St. John, stormily.

"Wyman must know nothing of our little business transaction. I shall take his place behind your counter, if you please."

The hook-nosed man of ribbons bowed and rubbed his hands fawningly. Grant Wyman could scarcely believe his own eyes when he saw a young fellow of six feet two standing behind the counter, as calmly complacent as if his whole life had been spent among tape, ribbons, and hoods and eyes.

The next moment Johnson was driving him away from the door, with a flutter of fur robes that made him almost fancy himself among the delusive shadowings of a delightful dream.

And how fared Talbot St. John? "Pretty well, considering," as the ladies say. Fortunately, it was early in the day, and beyond a few bargains in black pins, stay-laces and perfumed soaps, he had very little to do.

Presently, however, the shop began to fill apace—trade grew brisker, and Mr. St. John found plentiful use for all the quantum of business talent that he possessed.

"Have you any crochét-cotton?"
Down came half a dozen boxes of tape about Mr. St. John's ears—the natural consequence of the start he gave on hearing the sweet, familiar sound of Cecile Horner's voice.

"I don't know—that is, I'll see—Miss Horner!"
Cecile opened wide her beautiful brown eyes.

"Mr. St. John!"
And Mary—looking very daisy-like in a pink bonnet, with white flowers—echoed the surprised exclamation.

"Why, Mr. John! I didn't know—"
She stopped short, colouring as pink as her bonnet.
"We did not know that you occupied this station in life," said Cecile, haughtily, finishing her cousin's incomplete sentence. "Thank you, I don't care about the cotton."

And Miss Horner swept out of the low-ceiled little shop, dragging Mary with her.

"The idea!" she scornfully exclaimed, when they were once more in the street. "How dared Mrs. Emmons deceive us? To allow me to dance with a common clerk!"

"He is very gentlemanly, Cecile," meekly interposed Mary.

"Gentlemanly! An—an individual who sells pins and needles—a clerk!"

"But, Cecile, why can't a clerk be a gentleman?"

"Mary," exclaimed Cecile, indignantly, "you haven't the spirit of a fly! I do believe you like Mr. St. John now just as well as when you believed him the action of an old family!"

"Why shouldn't I?" meekly asked Mary.

"Well!" said Cecile, throwing volumes of scorn into one brief monosyllable. "I for one shall not recognise him in future. You can do as you like."

And Mary, walking by her stately cousin's side, marvelled at the strange rules and regulations of the arbitrary thing called "society," and rejoiced that she was not bound to swear allegiance to its dictates.

"I daresay my tastes are very common," thought meek Mary, "but—I can't help it."

"Cecile," whispered Mary, that same evening, in her cousin's ear, "surely, surely that is Mr. St. John."

Cecile looked in the direction of her cousin's eyes, out beyond the maze of waltzing couples to the tall figure advancing towards them.

"The assurance of the man," she exclaimed, contemptuously. "He never will dare to speak to me." But he did dare, holding out a frank hand as he spoke the stereotyped phrases of greeting.

Cecile Horner looked him full in the eyes with a glance that might have frozen him, and turned away without replying by word or syllable. Talbot St. John arched his eyebrows a little and smiled. Mary spoke up, on the impulse of the moment.

"Mr. St. John, please, please don't think I feel as Cecile does. Please shake hands with me?"

He held the soft little hand in his one moment, with a singular thrill in his breast.

"Are you unconventional enough to recognise the 'clerk,' Miss Horner?"

"I like you, Mr. St. John," said Mary, innocently. "I don't care whether you are a clerk or not."

His eyes brightened.

"You like me, Mary. Is there no other word for my tears, Mary—darling—I don't dare to ask if you love me?"

Through the din of harp, violin and sounding horn, the music of his words reached her ear—through the silver thrub of waltz music, her answer came to him.

"Oh, Talbot! I thought I had hidden it—my own heart."

And their eyes met—and they knew that hereafter they should be all the world to each other.

"To think that our Mary should engage herself to a common clerk," said Cecile, ready to cry with indignation, a day or so subsequently.

"My dear, I haven't the least idea what you mean," said honest Mrs. Emmons. "Isn't she engaged to Talbot St. John?"

"Yes, but he is—"

"He is the eldest son of the St. Johns of C—. Have you heard of the great coal mines on the St. John estate? An income of ten thousand a year at the very least."

"Mrs. Emmons, you are mistaken."

"No, I'm not, my dear. His mother was my schoolmate, and I have known Talbot from a child. Your cousin is in rare luck, for Talbot is one in a thousand."

Then Cecile Horner, in a maze of doubt and perplexity, told of the adventure in the "Cheap Trimming Shop." Mrs. Emmons burst out laughing.

"I can tell you all about that," she said, merrily. "I'm in Talbot's confidence."

And she told the story of how poor Grant Wyman

had had an invigorating drive in the Park on the January day, and how the heir of the St. Johns had officiated in his stead.

The moment she had gone, Cecile went straight upstairs and gave Mary a kiss.

"You are a dear little sensible thing," she said; "and I'm glad you have chosen such a husband!"

Nevertheless there was a secret, undefined bitterness in Cecile's heart to think that the rich prize had fallen to her little cousin's lot! And Cecile knew that it had been her own fault! A. R.

FACETIÆ.

A BAD COLD.—An editor has got such a cold in his head that the water freezes on his face when he washes it.

A LADY fixed the following letters in the bottom of a flour barrel, and asked her husband to read them, if he could: O-I-C-U-R-M-T.

"THERE is one kind o' ship I always steer clear of," said an old bachelor sea captain, "and that's courtship, 'cause on that ship there's always two mates and no captain."

A THRIFTY couple called on a Providence clergyman for marriage last week, and after the ceremony had the fee placed to their debit, borrowed an umbrella, and went out "with the world before them."

GROWING OLD.—Quin was one day lamenting that he grew old, when a shallow, impertinent young fellow said to him, "What would you give to be as young as I am?" "By the powers," replied Quin, "I would even submit to be almost as foolish."

AGRICULTURAL JOKES.

Prosperity is generally based upon knowledge and industry; the swine will always get most that nose most.

Farmers are like fowls; neither will get crops without industry.

Because a man who attends a flock of sheep is a shepherd, makes it no reason that a man who keeps cows is a coward.

We like to see a farmer increase the growth of useful plants and shrubs around his home, but do not like to see him use rails, poles, and boards to prop-a-gate with.

DUORA.—"What prospects for business this season?" asked one of a merchant, during one of the snow-storms, which dulled the earlier portion of the year. "Well, it don't look much like spring," was the ready reply. "Why not, there are plenty of snow-drops!" was the rejoinder.

ROYAL APPETITES.

The following curious details regarding the gastronomic tastes of the reigning sovereigns of Europe, are taken from a Paris paper:

NAPOLEON III.—Abstemious, cautious; never making the slightest remark to the servants. Moderate drinker, but great smoker. *Du reste*, the Emperor's kind and considerate manner to every member of his household, however humble his position, is worthy of imitation.

QUEEN VICTORIA.—Abstemious, Puseyite, liking beef and pastry.

ALEXANDER II.—Hearty eater, connoisseur in wine, preferring champagne and burgundy, and fond of game.

HIS PRUSSIAN MAJESTY.—Good drinker (Roederer, &c.), beef, mutton, biscuits, and sweet things. A pleasant and unaffected host.

HIS MAJESTY OF AUSTRIA.—Silent at table, eats dark meat, especially mutton and game, and drinks the national wines of Hungary and bordeaux.

VICTOR EMANUEL.—Mighty hunter. Capital appetite, eats only white meat and small game. Kills wild boar, but never eats their meat; drinks the Côte d'Or wines.

ISABELLA OF SPAIN.—Great appetite; prefers veal and white meat, drinks Spanish wines and bordeaux.

THE SULTAN.—Partisan of strong meats, of rice, of pastry, of Eastern fruit, and burgundy.

HIS DUTCH MAJESTY has the finest cellar in Europe; fond of fish, and especially salmon. His neighbour of Belgium eats very little, and always small game, and drinks sparingly of bordeaux.

THE EX-KING OF HANOVER lives on the Bohemian pheasant, the woodcock of Galicia, and smoked ham of Styria, and drinks moselle and the Rhine wines.

KING LOUIS OF PORTUGAL is the smallest eater in Europe.

IN THE TRADE.—Rev. Stephen H. Tyng was one morning walking to a church in which he was to preach. He was accompanied by his father. On the way they got into conversation with an old coloured man, who assured them that he had rejoiced in a

Christian hope for upwards of fifty years. "Are you going to this church?" It was the only church in the village. "No, sah, I neber go to that church." "You never go to church, and yet you have been a Christian these fifty years?" "No, sah, I neber go to hear them young ministers prae-tize—I'm a preacher myself—I is."

THE FARMER AND THE HALF-CROWN.

A certain parish minister, remarkable for his joking rather than for his preaching, requiring an "elder," to make up his "kirk session," applied to one of his members, a farmer, noted for his parsimoniousness, in order to his accepting the office.

The minister asked him if he would not like to become an "Elder."

The farmer inquired if there would be anything got by his accepting the office.

The minister, in one of his jocular moods, said: "Yes, you will get a suit of clothes at the end of the year, and a half-crown every day you are at the 'plate.'"

"Very well," said the farmer. "I think I will accept."

So the matter was arranged; the farmer being very attentive and punctual in the discharge of his duties, until a year had passed; when one Saturday afternoon the minister was rather surprised by a visit from the elder, who, after the usual salutations, broached the cause of his visit, by saying:

"I have come over about the suit of clothes."

"What suit of clothes?" said the minister.

"The suit of clothes you promised me when I became an elder."

"Oh," said the minister (who had forgotten all about the promise) "that was but a joke."

"The suit of clothes may have been a joke," said the farmer; "but the half-crown was no joke, for I helped myself in that matter."

PIPING.—Two gentlemen were scrutinizing a sign-board, on which was written "Ed. Orpheus, plumber and gas-fitter." One of them suggested the inappropriateness for such a name. "On the contrary," replied the other, "it seems very appropriate that he should go piping about."

ABOUT THAT KIND OF THING.

Sister: "Come, now, go and talk to little Miss Brown, Freddy, and be agreeable."

Freddy: "Oh, bother, no. I'm not going to make myself conspicuous and spooney, like you and Captain Noodle!"

TOO BAD.

Miss Betsy Pearl is "fair, fat, and forty," and unmarried. She manages to obtain an honest and comfortable living by keeping a small shop of "notions." She is a spruce old woman, and among other articles vends spruce-beer.

One evening a customer called for a glass of the beverage, inquiring at the same time if it was new-made beer.

"No," exclaimed a waggle bystander, just as she was about to reply in the affirmative; "I can assure you it is old maid beer."

The wag was seen suddenly to leave the lady's premises with a glass flying after him.

HOMŒOPATHIC MEALS.

A Good, Wholesome Breakfast.—Take the billionth part of a roll, crumble it in the fiftieth part of a pint of milk; boil the two together, and serve up with 18-60ths of a hard egg.

A Refreshing Luncheon.—Half a dram of cheese, and two ounces of stale bread, with 1-4 pint of table-beer in a quart of water.

A Healthy Dinner.—1 ounce, 6 drams, 2 scruples of lean rampsteak, 1-2 potato, and 18 grains of greens. For pudding: 10 pennyweights of boiled rice, with 10-17ths of a spoon of moist sugar. If fruit is in season, a handsome dessert may be sent up of 2 gooseberries, 6 currants, and the 48-100th part of an apple.

A Stiff Glass of Grog.—16 drops of gooseberry wine in a tumbler of water.

A Light Supper.—Two scruples of gruel, with the one thousandth part of a grain of nutmeg, and half as much of sugar.

An Infallible Cure for a Cold.—Drink 20-285ths of a Seidlitz powder, dissolved in a jug of water, put your feet in a pint of warm water, and apply to your nose some tallow, but be careful it is not more than the tenth part of a pin's head, or else it will do no good.

LEG OF MUTTON OR SHEEP.—When the Earl of Bradford was brought before the Lord Chancellor to be examined upon application for the statute of livery against him, the Chancellor asked him: "How many legs has a sheep?" "Does your lordship mean," answered Lord Bradford, "a live sheep or a dead sheep?" "Is it not the same thing?" said the Chancellor. "No, my lord," said Lord Bradford,

"there is much difference. A live sheep may have four legs—a dead sheep has only two—the fore legs are shoulders; but there are but two legs of mutton."

SWINE AND ACORNS.

(A Poem by a Porciculturist.)

What these canst do don't leave undone,
As the wise man did remark.
Therefore I, when up in London,
Thought I'd go see Richmond Park.
In that pleasant situation
Oak trees mostly do abound;
And I sid, wi' lamentation,
Acorns liver'n all the ground.
Want o' bread makes Christians riot,
Hogs, if hungry be their mood,
Can but grunt for want o' diet.
What a sinful waste o' food!
Herds o' swine, that Park all over,
Ought to be turned in to roam,
For to live like 'twere in clover,
In the Forest as at whoam.

Acorn-fed, both pork and bacon
Unto wet, some says, do run.
Not unless pigs' lives is taken
Fore their edification's done.
With high art I be acquainted;
For my likeness once I eat,
And I see a sign-board painted:
Just likewise a pig you fat.

Paint a pictur, then you lays un
Colour on, quat arter quat,
Last of all you takes and glaze un,
That's the way as I took note.
So wi' pigs you gives 'um taters
Fust, and wash, and oris, and peel,
Acorns next, and last the craters
Touches off wi' barley meal. *Punch.*

WHY are Curds like the Opposite House?—Because they are over the Whey.—*Punch.*

THE WEATHER IN GERMANY.—We understand it has lately been so hot at the gambling places that a large number of people have burnt their fingers at the tables.—*Punch.*

THE MARCH OF SCIENCE.

Artist (as a hint to his friend): "Bless me! Five o'clock! I had no idea it was so late. How quickly time does fly now!"

Fankee: "Which I calculate it's all owin' to the vast improvements effected in clocks by our great country."—*Punch.*

ALARMING.

Buttons (as he burst into his master's room on the night of Wednesday, the 7th: he had just seen that wonderful shooting star): "Oh, please, sir, them meteors is goin' off ag'in!"

Scientific Old Gent (startled out of his first sleep, and misunderstanding the intelligence): "Oh!—eh!—what!—Turn it off at the Main!"—*Punch.*

SILVER GILT.—Stealing the spoon.—*Tomahawk.*

THE RIGHTFUL HAIL.—Not the chignon!—*Tomahawk.*

WHAT ALL MUST COME TO (SOME DAY OR OTHER, LET US HOPE).—Their senses.—*Tomahawk.*

MOTTO FOR ISABELLA OF BOURBON.—What's one woman's pleasure is a country Spain.—*Tomahawk.*

CHURCH-MILITARY.—The weak point of the Brighton service.—The Purchase system.—*Tomahawk.*

NOT FROM THE DEY OF TUNIS.—We understand that a certain horse-trainer, fond of legal proceedings and favourite-scratchings, was heard to observe, a short time ago, that "The Admiral had roused the British Lion within him!"—*Tomahawk.*

NEWS FOR THE SOUTH MIDDLESEX RIFLES.—Some of Madame Rachel's friends declare it to be very hard that she should be so very severely punished for having been unable to put a new complexion on some of the features of an extremely bad case.—*Tomahawk.*

THERE is a good deal of dry humour about the Spanish Revolution. General Prim, it is said, remarked the other day, in reference to the poll-tax, that it had only been imposed for the purpose of proving to the world that Spain was determined to go a-head.—*Tomahawk.*

It is absolutely false that Exeter Hall, following the example set in the case of the Royal Alfred Marylebone Theatre, is to be shortly opened as a rival to the Alhambra, under the title of "The Christian," and under the patronage of a certain Royal jocular and popular Prince.—*Tomahawk.*

THE Middlesex Magistrates have once again been playing the fool. At the application for licenses the other day, they granted dancing certificates to Cremorne and the Alhambra, the Argyll Rooms, &c.,

and refused a similar favour to the London Pavilion. Really, every sensible person knows that a man only patronizes those places "out of curiosity" (to quote Lord Ranelagh). A fellow only goes to music halls to see the legs of the—tables!—*Tomahawk.*

H. R. H. THE PRINCE OF WALES has very properly refused to become a "Free and Accepted Mason." In this country this brotherhood is harmless enough. The members are all good fellows, and their ceremonies mean more or less "dinner and harmony." Abroad it is different—very often the machinery of the combination is used for spreading revolution and bloodshed. The Heir-Apparent to the British throne will get through life well enough without the aid of sham Christianity and Brama-gem "Brotherly love."—*Tomahawk.*

AND YET PAINTERS WILL GRUMBLE.

Farmer: "Tell 'ee what it is, young men; I loike that little picter. Bless if I won't give 'ee a bundle o' sparrowgrass for't!"—*Fun.*

SHAMMING ABRAHAM NEWLAND.—How the asperities prevail in life! Even those coveted articles—Bank of England notes—have three rough edges to one smooth.—*Fun.*

IMPORTANT TO AERONAUTS.—Who says that man will never have the power to fly?—A scientific friend of ours has so far solved the problem as to be able with the greatest ease to "skim over—a newspaper."—*Fun.*

THE GARDEN-GATE.

Two wooden posts, with urns atop;
Between them hangs the gate;
And though it seemed like others, still
I've never seen its mate.
And backwards, forwards swings it oft,
On hinges red with rust;
Before it runs the broad high-road,
All white with summer dust.
Behind it lies the garden path,
'Twixt rows of shining box;
And even now my thoughts recall
The gorgeous hollyhocks.

Its latch is rusty, like its hinge—
And though it is a year
That has so lightly flown—its click
I fancy I can hear.

Outside, a maple's branches fleet
The dear old gate with shade,
And star the narrow walk beyond
As though it were inland;

And in the rich October month,
When autumn's glories burn,
Above it there the maple's leaves
To deepest crimson turn.

Sometimes, in thought, a listless boy,
Once more I seem to wait,
As oft of old, with folded arms,
Beside the garden-gate.

To watch the yellow sunbeams slant
Athwart the maple's leaves,
And dream again the golden dreams
That boyhood's fancy weaves.

To stand and gaze down the road
That from the village came,
And there to meditate upon
The road that leads to fame.

Oh, happiest days of all my life,
When I was wont to wait,
A listless boy, with folded arms,
Beside the garden-gate.

N. G. S.

GEMS.

THE heart has no avenues so open as that of flattery, which, like some enchantment, lays all its guards asleep.

Of all the agonies in life, that which is most poignant and harrowing—that which, for the time, annihilates reason, and leaves our whole organization one lacerated, mangled heart—is the conviction that we have been deceived where we placed all the trust of love.

LABOUR.—Labour, honest labour, is mighty and beautiful. Activity is the ruling element of life, and its highest relish. Luxuries and conquests are the results of labour; we can imagine nothing without it. The noblest man on earth is he who puts hands cheerfully and proudly to honest labour. Labour is a business and ordinance of heaven. Suspend labour, and where is the glory and pomp of earth—the fruit, fields, and palaces, and the fashionings of matter for which men strive and war? Let the labour-scorner

look to himself, and learn what are its trophies. From the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, unless he is a Carib, naked as the beast, he is the debtor and slave of toil. The labour which he scorns has tricked him into the stature and appearance of a man. Whence gets he his garments and equipage? Let labour answer. Labour—which makes music in the mine, and the furrow, and the forge. Oh, scorn labour, do you—man who never yet earned a morsel of bread! Labour pities you, proud fool, and laughs you to scorn. You shall pass to dust, forgotten, but labour will live on for ever, glorious in its conquests and monuments.

HUMAN HAIR.

SOME horrible disclosures relative to the trade in human hair are made by M. Pierre Veron, in a Paris paper, from which we extract the following: "Long hair now costs as much as 110*fr.* a pound; short hair ranges between 18*fr.* and 35*fr.* One of the principal dealers in human tresses occupies a house five stories high entirely to himself, and last year he did business to the extent of 1,233,000*fr.* The capillary razzias executed among the peasantry no longer suffice to meet the enormous demand. The hair of dead persons, cut off the corpses in the hospitals, is a great help, but still insufficient. So importations from abroad are had recourse to. Certain German provinces specially supply fair hair. Black hair is to be found in South America, whence come whole cargoes of it, while to North America we export immense quantities of hair made up into head-dresses. The dearest hair is the completely white. Of a certain length it is hardly to be found, and a chemist thought of seeking means to take the colour out of hair. He has got as far as mottled gray, but the true white has yet to be discovered. A few days ago we recorded the arrival at Havre of a ship-load of human hair from Mexico, in such a filthy condition, that the harbour authorities had to order the removal of the vessel, to prevent its cargo breeding a pestilence. The exposure of the grogarine nastiness was sufficient proof that mere filthiness is not enough to prevent the votaries of fashion from persisting in making themselves ridiculous; but the knowledge that the false head-dress of a sensitive lady may have been cut from a fever-stricken corpse, and may communicate to the wearer a most loathsome disease, will, it is to be hoped, do something towards checking the increase of a disgusting trade, and help to abolish the wearing of the hideous, contagion-bearing *chignons*."

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE dates of the beginning and end of the reign of Isabella II. form a singular coincidence. She was proclaimed Queen on the 29th September, 1833, and was dethroned on the 29th September, 1868.

PROFESSOR WHITTLESBY has discovered evidences of the residence of man at the High Beck Spring, Saratoga, just 4,840 years ago, or about six centuries before the deluge.

NINE young men left Rouen on velocipedes at seven a.m. and entered Paris at nine p.m. Three hours of the time were occupied in resting and refreshing man and velocipede, so that the distance of 110 miles was accomplished in eleven hours, being at the rate of ten miles per hour. In England there seems to be no notion of using the new animal as in France. How is this, ye land of mechanics?

SHOING A PEEL.—A short time since, Lady Louisa Finch, Lord Redesdale, Mr. Campbell (who were on a visit to George Finch, Esq., Burley-on-the-Hill), and G. H. Finch, Esq., M.P. for Rutland, paid a visit to Oakham Castle to inspect the old Norman Hall (the oldest in England except Westminster Hall) and its horseshoes. This getting to the ears of the bailiff, he was quickly down upon his Lordship for the honour of a shoe. Lord Redesdale selected one similar to those which of late have been fixed on the walls, and the new shoe will shortly be added to the large number now in the castle. The old manorial custom from which this arises took place at the first erection of the castle, on the grant to Walcheline de Ferrars, whose ancestors bore arms *sensé* of horseshoes, as designative of his office of Master of the Horse to the Duke of Normandy. In the early Norman period of our history grants of customs seem to have been on this principle, that the Lords de Ferrars were entitled to demand from every baron, on his first passing through this lordship, a shoe from one of the horses, to be nailed upon the castle gate, the bailiff of the manor being empowered to stop the horses (and carriages also of late years) until service was performed. The custom is still preserved in Lord Redesdale giving a shoe on the 24th of September, 1868.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. B.—You can sue in the Epcom County Court.

KINGSBRIDGE.—See our answer to "Gertrude and Ethel."

ALPHONSO.—The Volunteer Act does not extend to Ireland.

GERTRUDE AND ETHEL.—The safest depilatory is a pair of tweezers and patience.

A HOUSEKEEPER.—Dilute with a little warm water, to which add a small quantity of sugar and flour.

MARIA.—Having been born in Ireland of English parents, you are, without doubt, an English girl.

GEORGE FAURBERGER.—Apply to a teacher of music; or even a music-seller would give you the information.

IGNORAMUS.—On conducting a lady to the dining-room, offer her the left arm; when walking with her in the streets, give the inner side.

J. RICHARDS.—We know of no other name for the ingredient. Apply to a wholesale druggist. Walker describes it as a plant.

EDWIN SILCOX.—You will find a list of printing-machine manufacturers in the London Post-office Directory, any of whom will furnish you with full particulars.

H. T. GREATWOOD.—Your only course is to employ a solicitor to make the discovery; that being done, you can put into court your wife's claim.

MATTIE.—We are not aware that the celebrated Prussian Minister possesses a residence in London. You should apply at the Prussian Embassy, 9, Carlton House Terrace.

HENRY G. CROSS.—You can only obtain such a situation through the interest of a commander of one of Her Majesty's ships. Testimonials would be all important in any case.

N. Y..—We cannot give the names and addresses of tradespeople in these columns. At all events, you can refer to the pages of the Post-office London Directory.

EMMA.—He that sympathizes in all the happiness of others himself enjoys the surest happiness; and he who is warned by the folly of others has attained the soundest wisdom.

H. WHITE.—In 1483 jew trees were plentifully planted in churchyards for the making of bows; the reason for their being selected for such a purpose, was on account of their being fenced in from cattle.

WALTER FLEMING.—The standard height for the Household Cavalry is 6 ft. without boots. At the time of the Crimean war the standard of the Foot Guards was reduced to 5 ft. 8 in. The Grenadier Companies 6 ft.

S. B. W.—To make gingerbread: take 2 lbs. of flour, 1 lb. of butter, 1 lb. of sugar, 1 oz. of powdered ginger, 1 oz. of cinnamon, 6 oz. of nutmeg, a little cassia, powdered, and 1 pint of molasses; mix with water and knead well.

MISS DAGMAR.—Had this correspondent done us the justice to have perused these columns, she would have observed how frequently we have had occasion to give notice to our correspondents, that we cannot answer their communications through the Post-office.

ROSALINE.—We know of no such institution. You should carefully watch the advertisements in the daily newspapers, and if you can afford it, advertise your requirements. Emigrants are assisted at the Government Emigration Office, Park-street, Westminster.

LEWIS.—The invention of lamps is ascribed to the Egyptians. The Greeks and Romans had them of various forms and excellent workmanship. The common Argand lamp is so named from its inventor, a native of Switzerland, and was brought into use about 1786.

L. L.—Enigmas are compositions based upon ideas, rather than upon words, and are frequently constructed so as to mislead, and to surprise when the solution is made known. Enigmas may be founded upon simple catches, like conundrums, in which form they are usually called riddles.

MARTIN.—The literal meaning of *suaviter in modo, fortiter in re*, is sweetly, or pleasantly in manner, but vigorously or firmly in action, deed, or execution; *corpus delicti* is a law phrase, and means the body of the crime, or the whole nature of the offence.

AN INQUIRY.—To promote the growth of the hair: take 2 oz. of eau de Cologne, 5 drachms of tincture of cantharides, and ten drops of oil of lavender or rosemary; mix all together, and apply to the roots of the hair, once or twice a day; but should the skin become sore, discontinue for a time, or use at longer intervals.

HUBERT SATTON.—This correspondent has fallen desperately in love with his master's beautiful daughter; has confessed his passion, and been refused by the haughty maid, and still haughtier "parient," as he is in too inferior a position in life to aspire to the fair one's hand. Under the circumstances, he applies to us for advice, for, in one sen-

tence, he has become, like "Villikins," in the tragic ballad, "tired of his life," "determined to go to sea," and to raise himself in the world, if he could only obtain a ray of hope that ultimately the young lady's hand would become the reward of his struggles. "Hubert Satton" should obtain another situation and healthy occupation for his mind, by way of recreation from business, when he would find the truth of the axiom, "out of sight, out of mind." Besides, "Hubert" must be somewhat mean-spirited to persist in his addresses after having received so plain a hint from his master. It is not the good fortune of all apprentices to marry their masters' daughters, as did Osborne, the ancestor of the Duke of Leeds. Whittington, and Hogarth's industrious apprentice, Goodchild.

ELLEN.—The modest deportment of those who are truly wise, when contrasted with the assuming air of the ignorant, may be compared to the different appearances of wheat, which, while its ear is empty, holds up its head proudly, but as soon as it is filled with grain, bends modestly down, and withdraws from observation.

W. R.—Binnacle is a wooden case used on board ship to hold the compasses, log-glasses, watch-glasses, and lights, to show the compass at night. On board a man-of-war there are always two binnacles, one for the man who steers the vessel, and one for the officer or sailor who superintends the steering.

J. ANNOT.—Water-deck is a painted piece of canvas, which is made sufficiently large to cover the saddle and bridle, girths, &c. of a dragoon's horse. When the tents are not large enough to admit of these articles, in addition to the fire-arms and bags of necessities, the water-decks serve to secure them from rain, and are fastened with pegs to the ground.

MARIAN.—Though the pure consciousness of worthy actions, abstracted from the personal views of popular applause be an evident and ample reward to the philanthropist, yet the desire for fame and distinction among the sons of earth, was undoubtedly implanted in human nature, as an additional incentive to exert our faculties in virtuous excellence.

H. H.—Jute is the fibre of two plants, the *chomel* and *abund*, extensively cultivated in Bengal for making gunny cloth. Jute has been much manufactured at Dundee as a substitute for flax, low, &c., and in 1862, it was asserted that it could be employed as a substitute for cotton; in 1861, great quantities of undressed jute were imported into the United Kingdom.

ORLANDO.—A lease is a conveyance of premises or lands for a specified term of years, at a yearly rent; with definite conditions as to alterations, repairs, payment of rent, forfeiture, &c. Being an instrument of much importance, it should always be drawn up by a respectable attorney, who will see that all the conditions in the interest of the lessee are fulfilled.

FRAGMENT.

And let your love hang with a careless grace
About its object, like a falling lace
Over a statue, draping, not concealing;
Rather, in veiling grace new grace revealing:
Let it repose—a wreath upon the hair,
Worn with delight, not wearisome to wear:
Let it, like odours, give delight unseen,
Let it, like heaven's blue, or the cool green
Of woods, awaken an unconscious joy:
But, oh, beware the sweetness that may cloy—
Love free, in freedom happy, will not fly;
Love caged, will droop, and pine away, and die.

W. S.

ANNIE.—1. To clean white far: lay it on a table, and rub it well with bran made moist with warm water, afterwards with dry bran; the wet bran should be put on with flannel, and the dry with a piece of book muslin; the appearance of the far may be greatly improved by rubbing it well with magnesia, after the bran process. 2. Your handwriting requires considerable practice; the letters are not clearly formed.

R. H..—1. The following is an excellent hair curling liquid: 2 oz. of borax, 5 drachms of powdered gum senegal, 1 quart of hot water; stir, and as soon as the ingredients are dissolved, add 2 oz. of spirit of wine, strongly impregnated with camphor. On retiring to rest, wet the ends of the hair with the above liquid. 2. To whiten the hands, the paste of sweet almonds, which contain an oil fit for rendering the skin soft and elastic, may be beneficially applied.

JULIUS.—The Elgin Marbles were derived chiefly from the Parthenon, a temple of Minerva on the Acropolis at Athens, of which they formed part of the frieze and pediment, built by Phidias about 450 B.C. Thomas, Lord Elgin, began the collection of these marbles during his mission to the Ottoman Porte in 1802. They were purchased of him by the British Government for 25,000*l.* and placed in the British Museum, in 1816.

MARK.—In 925, A.D., coroners were officers of the realm; coroners for every county in England were first appointed by a statute of Westminster, in 1276. They are chosen for life by the freeholders and their duty is to inquire into the cause of any violent or unnatural death, upon view of the body; by an act passed in 1843, coroners are enabled to appoint deputies to act for them, but only in cases of illness. They were instituted in Scotland in the reign of Malcolm II. about 1004.

CYRUS.—1. The best and most comprehensive system is, in our opinion, Pitman's Phonography. You can obtain books for self-teaching at Messrs. Pitman, Paternoster-row, E.C. 2. Ollendorff's system of teaching the French language in six months, is, without doubt, the best for self-learners. French dictionaries are so numerous that we cannot recommend one in particular. Your choice must be bounded by your means, for in price they range from 2*s.* 6*d.* to three or four guineas.

REINALDO.—The manchineel tree grows on the shores of the West India Islands, and of the American continent in the same latitude; it is a high branching tree, with a grayish bark, not unlike that of the Japan varnish tree; its leaves are oval and pointed, its flowers small and yellow, or, as some botanists say, dark purple. It grows on sandy soil, and bears a fruit resembling small apples. Every part of the tree yields a milky juice, very caustic, and consequently poisonous; a single drop of it on the back of the hand will raise a blister instantaneously. The Indians used to employ

this juice to poison their arrows; the shade of this tree is also said to be dangerous, and even the rain which has been in contact with its leaves. Many travellers, however, who have passed under it, deny its poisonous effect.

STERNUM.—There are various kinds of chapels; such as, chapels of ease, free chapels, the Chapel Royal, &c. The gentleman pensioners (formerly poor knights of Windsor, who were instituted by Henry VIII.) were called Knights of the Chapel. The place of conference among printers, and the conference itself, is by them called a chapel; because the first work printed in England was executed in a ruined chapel in Westminster Abbey, converted to the purpose by Caxton.

BLASTICK.—Much less of success in life is in reality dependent upon accident, or what is called "luck," than is commonly supposed; far more depends upon the objects which man proposes to himself, the attainments he aspires to, the circle which bounds his vision and thoughts; whether he looks to the end and aim of the whole of life, or only to the present day or hour; whether he listens to the voice of indolence or vulgar pleasure, or to the stirring voice of his own soul, urging his ambition on to laudable objects.

SILVIA.—Thought engenders thought; place one idea on paper, another will follow it, and still another; until you have written a page. You cannot fashion your mind. There is a well of thought there, which it is not easy to sound; the more you draw from it the more clear and fruitful it will be. If you neglect to think for yourself, and use other people's thoughts, you will never know what you are capable of. At first your ideas may come out homely and shapeless, but no matter, time and perseverance will arrange and refine them. Learn to think, and you will learn to write; the more you think, the better you will express your ideas.

H. J. MITCHELL, seventeen, 5 ft. 5 in., auburn hair, pretty, dark eyes, good looking, and fond of home.

GERTRUDE ALICE, eighteen, a blonde, blue eyes, and of good family. Respondent must be respectable, tall, and handsome.

W. L., seventeen, tall, fair, gray eyes, a good tradesman, and will have 600*l.* when of age. Respondent must be tall, dark, and handsome. No objection to a little money.

LORETTA G. and FLORENCE M.—"Lorettia," medium height, fair hair, hazel eyes, and considered pretty. "Florence," tall, dark hair, blue eyes, and good-looking.

W. J., twenty-two, 5 ft. 9 in., (in the R. M.), dark curly hair, good looking, and would make a kind husband. Respondent must be good looking, not over twenty-one, with respectable connections.

FLORENCE MAY, eighteen, tall, dark brown hair and eyes, fair, and pretty. Respondent must be one or two years her senior, tall and dark, a tradesman or mechanic preferred. Handwriting requires practice and care.

SOPHY and BEATRICE, both twenty-five, medium height, good looking, respectably connected, domesticated, and fond of home. Respondents must be dark, intellectual, and of cheerful dispositions; tradesmen preferred.

ANNE, eighteen, tall, fair, black hair, dark eyes, and of a loving disposition. Respondent must be tall, dark, and good looking, with a small fortune; a respectable tradesman or mechanic preferred.

LESLIE, thirty-four (the daughter of a tradesman), 5 ft. 7 in., brown hair, gray eyes, a good housekeeper, and fond of home. Respondent must be tall, fair, have an appointment under Government, and about the same age. Handwriting good.

CARRIE, JESSIE, and EMILY.—"Carrie," twenty, tall, dark hair and blue eyes. Respondent must be good tempered and a tradesman. "Jessie," fifteen, dark hair and eyes, 5 ft. 9 in. Respondent must be good looking. "Emily," dark hair, gray eyes, and domesticated. Respondent must be a railway guard.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

CLAUDE is responded to by—"Clara," medium height, dark, and a tradesman's daughter; and—"Louise Alberta," twenty, tall, dark, good looking, and fond of home.

D. M. (the widow), by—"D. P.," and—"T. L.," widower, forty-nine, Government employ.

Bloss by—"Every Inch a Sailor," dark, medium height, blue eyes, and good tempered; and—"W. B.," a seaman on board of the Excellent, good looking, 5 ft. 1 in., gentle, and fond of home.

J. S. by—"Lola Montez," tall and fair.

SARAH by—"E. L."

EDITH C. by—"Harry E.," forty-five, (a widower), fair, with a young family, a tradesman.

EMILY CLAYTON by—"G. Wylie," nineteen, 5 ft. 7 in., fair, a joiner and cabinet maker.

MICHAEL STANLEY by—"F. G.," a sailor, with plenty of prize money, good looking, dark blue eyes, dark hair, 5 ft. 11 in., good tempered; and—"W. C.," 5 ft. 8 in., petty officer in the navy.

Gus by—"Marie," eighteen, dark hazel eyes, light brown hair, 5 ft. 1 in., a loving disposition, and fond of home—"Forget Me Not," eighteen, fair, petite, and pretty; and—"Nelly."

HUBERT (a widower) by—"Emily," thirty, dark, a tradesman's daughter, has a little money, respectable, and domesticated—"Eliza," twenty-eight, respectable, good tempered, and thoroughly domesticated—"A Young Widow," very domesticated, tall, and of an unexceptionable family; and—"Ann R.," thirty, respectable, and domesticated.

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Price of a Single Truss, 16s., 21s., 26s. 6d., and 31s. 6d. Postage, 1s.

" of a Double Truss, 31s. 6d., 42s., and 52s. 6d. Postage, 1s. 8d.

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FRENCH MUSLINS,

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. B.—You can see in the Epsom County Court.
KINGSBIDGE.—See our answer to "Gertrude and Ethel."
ALPHONSO.—The Volunteer Act does not extend to Ireland.

GERTRUDE AND ETHEL.—The safest depilatory is a pair of tweezers and patience.

A HOUSEKEEPER.—Dilute with a little warm water, to which add a small quantity of sugar and flour.

MARIA.—Having been born in Ireland of English parents, you are, without doubt, an English girl.

GEORGE FAIRBRIDGE.—Apply to a teacher of music; or even a music-seller would give you the information.

IGNORAMUS.—On conducting a lady to the dining-room, offer her the left arm; when walking with her in the streets, give the inner side.

J. RICHARDS.—We know of no other name for the ingredient. Apply to a wholesale druggist. Walker describes it as a plant.

EDWIN SILCOX.—You will find a list of printing-machine manufacturers in the London Post-office Directory, any of whom will furnish you with full particulars.

H. T. GARATWOOD.—Your only course is to employ a solicitor to make the discovery; that being done, you can put into court your wife's claim.

MATTIE.—We are not aware that the celebrated Prussian Minister possesses a residence in London. You should apply at the Prussian Embassy, 5, Carlton House Terrace.

HENRY G. CROSS.—You can only obtain such a situation through the interest of a commander of one of Her Majesty's ships. Testimonials would be all important in any case.

N. Y.—We cannot give the names and addresses of tradespeople in these columns. At all events, you can refer to the pages of the Post-office London Directory.

EMMA.—He that sympathises in all the happiness of others himself enjoys the surest happiness; and he who is warned by the folly of others has attained the soundest wisdom.

H. WHITE.—In 1483 few trees were plentifully planted in churchyards for the making of bows; the reason for their being selected for such a purpose, was on account of their being fenced in from cattle.

WALTER PLUMLEY.—The standard height for the Household Cavalry is 6 ft., without boots. At the time of the Crimean war the standard of the Foot Guards was reduced to 5 ft. 6 in. The Grenadier companies 6 ft.

S. B. W.—To make gingerbread: take 3 lbs. of flour, 1 lb. of butter, ½ lb. of sugar, 1 oz. of powdered ginger, 1 oz. of cinnamon, 6 oz. of nutmeg, a little cassia, powdered, and 1 pint of molasses; mix with water and knead well.

Mrs. DAWSON.—Had this correspondent done us the justice to have perused these columns, she would have observed how frequently we have had occasion to give notice to our correspondents, that we cannot answer their communications through the Post-office.

ROSALINE.—We know of no such institution. You should carefully watch the advertisements in the daily newspapers, and if you can afford it, advertise your requirements. Emigrants are assisted at the Government Emigration Office, Park-street, Westminster.

LEICHA.—The invention of lamps is ascribed to the Egyptians. The Greeks and Romans had them of various forms and excellent workmanship. The common Argand lamp is so named from its inventor, a native of Switzerland, and was brought into use about 1786.

L. L.—Enigmas are compositions based upon ideas, rather than upon words, and are frequently constructed so as to mislead, and to surprise when the solution is made known. Enigmas may be founded upon simple catches, like conundrums, in which form they are usually called riddles.

MARTIN.—The literal meaning of *suaviter in modo, fortiter in re*, is sweetly, or pleasantly in manner, but vigorously or firmly in action, deed, or execution; *corpus delicti* is a law phrase, and means the body of the crime, or the whole nature of the offence.

AN INQUIRER.—To promote the growth of the hair: take 2 oz. of eau de Cologne, 2 drachms of tincture of cantharides, and ten drops of oil of lavender or rosemary; mix all together, and apply to the roots of the hair, once or twice a day; but should the skin become sore, discontinue for a time, or use at longer intervals.

HUBERT SATTON.—This correspondent has fallen desperately in love with his master's beautiful daughter; has confessed his passion, and been refused by the haughty maid, and still haughtier "parient," as he is in too inferior a position in life to aspire to the fair one's hand. Under the circumstances, he applies to us for advice, for, in one sen-

tence, he has become, like "Villikins," in the tragic ballad, "tired of his life," "determined to go to sea," and to raise himself in the world, if he could only obtain a ray of hope that ultimately the young lady's hand would become the reward of his struggles. Hubert Sattton should obtain another situation and healthy occupation for his mind, by way of recreation from business, when he would find the truth of the axiom, "out of sight, out of mind." Besides, "Hubert" must be somewhat mean-spirited to persist in his addresses after having received so plain a hint from his innamorata. It is not the good fortune of all apprentices to marry their masters' daughters, as did Osborne, the ancestor of the Duke of Leeds, Whittington, and Hogarth's industrious apprentice, Goodchild.

ELLEN.—The modest deportment of those who are truly wise, when contrasted with the assuming air of the ignorant, may be compared to the different appearances of wheat, which, while its ear is empty, holds up its head proudly, but as soon as it is filled with grain, bends modestly down, and withdraws from observation.

W. B.—Binnacle is a wooden case used on board ship to hold the compasses, log-glasses, watch-glasses, and lights, to show the compass at night. On board a man-of-war there are always two binnacles, one for the man who steers the vessel, and one for the officer or sailor who superintends the steering.

J. ABBOT.—Water-deck is a painted piece of canvas, which is made sufficiently large to cover the saddle and bridle, girths, &c., of a draught horse. When the tents are not large enough to admit of these articles, in addition to the fire-arms and bags of necessities, the water-decks serve to secure them from rain, and are fastened with pegs to the ground.

MARIAN.—Though the pure consciousness of worthy actions, abstracted from the personal views of popular applause be an evident and ample reward to the philanthropist, yet the desire for fame and distinction among the sons of earth, was undoubtedly implanted in human nature, as an additional incentive to exert our faculties in virtuous excellence.

H. H.—Jute is the fibre of two plants, the *chomak* and *bandak*, extensively cultivated in Bengal for making gunny cloth. Jute has been much manufactured at Dundee as a substitute for flax, tow, &c., and in 1862, it was asserted that it could be employed as a substitute for cotton; in 1861, great quantities of undressed jute were imported into the United Kingdom.

ORLANDO.—A lease is a conveyance of premises or lands for a specified term of years, at a yearly rent; with definite conditions as to alterations, repairs, payment of rent, forfeiture, &c. Being an instrument of much importance, it should always be drawn up by a respectable attorney, who will see that all the conditions in the interest of the lessee are fulfilled.

FRAGMENT.

And let your love hang with a careless grace
About its object, like a falling lace
Over a statue, drapery, not concealing;
Rather, in veiling grace new grace revealing:
Let it repose—a wreath upon the hair,
Worn with delight, not wearisome to wear;
Let it, like odours, give delight unseen,
Let it, like heaven's blue, or the cool green
Of woods, awaken an unconscious joy;
But, oh, beware the sweetest that may cloy—
Love free, in freedom happy, will not fly;
Love caged, will droop, and pine away, and die.

W. S.

ANNIE.—1. To clean white fur: lay it on a table, and rub it well with bran and water. 2. Lay the water after wards with dry bran; the wet bran should be put on with flannel, and the dry with a piece of book muslin; the appearance of the fur may be greatly improved by rubbing it well with magnesia, after the bran process. 3. Your handwriting requires considerable practice; the letters are not clearly formed.

R. H.—1. The following is an excellent hair curling liquid: 2 oz. of borax, 1 drachm of powdered gum senegal, 1 quart of hot water; stir, and as soon as the ingredients are dissolved, add 2 oz. of spirit of wine, strongly impregnated with camphor. On retiring to rest, wet the ends of the hair with the above liquid. 2. To whiten the hands, the paste of sweet almonds, which contain an oil fit for rendering the skin soft and elastic, may be beneficially applied.

JULIUS.—The Elgin Marbles were derived chiefly from the Parthenon, a temple of Minerva on the Acropolis at Athens, of which they formed part of the frieze and pediment, built by Phidias about 500 B.C. Thomas, Lord Elgin, began the collection of these marbles during his mission to the Ottoman Porte in 1802. They were purchased of him by the British Government for 35,000*l.* and placed in the British Museum, in 1816.

MARE.—In 925, A.D., coroners were officers of the realm; coroners for every county in England were first appointed by a statute of Westminster, in 1276. They are chosen for life by the freeholders and their duty is to inquire into the cause of any violent or unnatural death, upon view of the body; by an act passed in 1843, coroners are enabled to appoint deputies to act for them, but only in case of illness. They were instituted in Scotland in the reign of Malcolm II. about 1004.

OTROG.—1. The best and most comprehensive system is in our opinion, Pitman's Phonography. You can obtain books for self-instruction at Messrs. Pitman, Paternoster-row, E.C. 2. Ollendorf's system of teaching the French language in six months, is, without doubt, the best for self-learners. French dictionaries are so numerous that we cannot recommend one in particular. Your choice must be bounded by your means, for in price they range from 2*s.* 6*d.* to three or four guineas.

REGINALD.—The manchineel tree grows on the shores of the West India Islands, and of the American continent in the same latitude; it is high branched tree, with a grayish bark, not unlike that of the Japan varnish tree; its leaves are oval and pointed, its flowers small and yellow, or, as some botanists say, dark purple. It grows on sandy soil, and bears a fruit resembling small apples. Every part of the tree yields a milky juice, very caustic, and consequently poisonous; a single drop of it on the back of the hand will raise a blister instantaneously. The Indians used to employ

this juice to poison their arrows; the shade of this tree is also said to be dangerous, and even the rain which has been in contact with its leaves. Many travellers, however, who have reposed under it, deny its pernicious effect.

STEPHEN.—There are various kinds of chapels; such as, chapels of ease, free chapels, the Chapel Royal, &c. The gentleman pensioners (formerly poor knights of Windsor, who were instituted by Henry VIII.) were called Knights of the Chapel. The place of conference amongst the monks, and the conference itself, is by them called a chapel; because the first work printed in England was executed in a ruined chapel in Westminster Abbey, converted to the purpose by Caxton.

EUSTACE.—Much less of success in life is in reality dependent upon accident, or what is called "luck," than is commonly supposed; far more depends upon the objects which man proposes to himself, the attainments he aspires to, the circle which bounds his vision and thoughts; whether he looks to the end and aim of the whole of life, or only to the present day or hour; whether he listens to the voice of indolence or vulgar pleasure, or to the stirring voice of his own soul, urging his ambition on to laudable objects.

SELINA.—Thought engenders thought; place one idea on paper, another will follow it, and still another; until you have written a page. You cannot fashion your mind. There is a well of thought there, which it is not easy to sound; the more you draw from it the more clear and fruitful it will be. If you neglect to think for yourself, and use other people's thoughts, you will never know what you are capable of. At first your ideas may come out homely and shapeless, but no matter, time and perseverance will arrange and refine them. Learn to think, and you will learn to write; the more you think, the better you will express your ideas.

H. J. MITCHELL, seventeen, 5 ft. 5 in., Auburn hair, pretty, dark eyes, good looking, and fond of home.

GERTRUDE ALICE, eighteen, a blonde, blue eyes, and of good family. Respondent must be respectable, tall, and handsome.

W. L., seventeen, tall, fair, grey eyes, a good tradesman and will have 600*l.* when of age. Respondent must be tall, dark, and handsome. No objection to a little money.

LUCRETIA G. and FLORENCE M.—"Lucretia," medium height, fair hair, hazel eyes, and considered pretty. "Florence," tall, dark hair, blue eyes, and good-looking.

W. J., twenty-two, 5 ft. 9 in., (in the B. N.), dark curly hair, good looking, and would make a kind husband. Respondent must be good looking, not over twenty-one, with respectable connections.

FLORENCE M., eighteen, tall, dark brown hair and eyes, fair, and pretty. Respondent must be one or two years her senior, tall and dark, a tradesman or mechanic preferred. Handwriting requires practice and care.

SOPHY and BEATRICE, both twenty-five, medium height, good looking, respectively connected, domesticated, and fond of home. Respondents must be dark, intellectual, and of cheerful dispositions; tradesman preferred.

AGNES, eighteen, tall, fair, black hair, dark eyes, and of a loving disposition. Respondent must be tall, dark, and good looking, with a small fortune; a respectable tradesman or mechanic preferred.

LIZZIE, thirty-four (the daughter of a tradesman), 5 ft. 7 in., brown hair, gray eyes, a good housekeeper, and fond of home. Respondent must be tall, fair, have an appointment under Government, and about the same age. Handwriting good.

CARRIE, JESSIE, and EMILY—"Carrie," twenty, tall, dark hair and blue eyes. Respondent must be good tempered and a tradesman. "Jessie," fifteen, dark hair and eyes, 4 ft. 9 in. Respondent must be good looking. "Emily," dark hair, gray eyes, and domesticated. Respondent must be a railway guard.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

CLAUDE is responded to by—"Clara," medium height, dark, and a tradesman's daughter; and—"Louise Alberta," twenty, tall, dark, good looking, and fond of home.

D. M. (the widow), by—"D. P.," and—"T. L.," widower, forty-nine, Government employ.

ROSE by—"Every Inch a Sailor," dark, medium height, blue eyes, and good tempered; and—"W. B.," a seaman on board of the *Excellent*, good looking, 6 ft. 1 in., gentle, and fond of home.

F. S. by—"Lois Montez," tall and fair.

SARAH by—"E. L."

EDITH C. by—"Harry S.," forty-five, (a widower), fair, with a young family, a tradesman.

EMILY CLAYTON by—"G. Wyle," nineteen, 5 ft. 7 in., fair, a joiner and cabinet maker.

MIRIAM STANLEY by—"F. G.," a sailor, with plenty of prize money, good looking, dark blue eyes, dark hair, 5 ft. 11 in., good tempered; and—"W. C.," 5 ft. 5 in., pretty officer in the navy.

Gus by—"Marie," eighteen, dark hazel eyes, light brown hair, 5 ft. 1 in., a loving disposition, and fond of home—"Forget Me Not," eighteen, fair, pretty, and—"Nelly."

HUBERT (a widower) by—"Emily," thirty, dark, a tradesman's daughter, has a little money, respectable, and domesticated—"Eliza," twenty-eight, respectable, good tempered, and thoroughly domesticated—"A Young Widow," very domesticated, tall, and of an unexceptionable family; and—"Ann R.," thirty, respectable, and domesticated.

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THE VOICE AND THROAT.

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Removes the scurf and all impurities from the skin
Strengthens the Weak Hair, prevents its turning
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Grey Hair to its original colour,
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In cut crystal stoppered
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Warranted not to stain the Skin.
THE HAIR DYED IN ONE MINUTE
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One application prevents the hair from
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CAUTION.—CHLORODYNE.

VICE-CHANCELLOR SIR W. P. WOOD stated that **Dr. J. COLLIS BROWNE** was undoubtedly the Inventor of Chlorodyne; that the statements of the Defendant Freeman were deliberately untrue, and he regretted to say that they had been sworn to. Eminent Hospital Physicians of London stated that **Dr. J. COLLIS BROWNE** was the discoverer of Chlorodyne; that they prescribe it largely; and mean no other than **Dr. BROWNE'S**.—See Times, July 13, 1864. Subsequently confirmed by the trade at large. See the *Lancet*, April 8, 1865. The public therefore are cautioned against using any other than

DR. J. COLLIS BROWNE'S CHLORODYNE.

THIS INVALUABLE REMEDY produces quiet, refreshing sleep, relieves pain, calms the system, restores the deranged functions, and stimulates healthy action of the secretions of the body, without creating any of these unpleasant results attending the use of opium. Old and young may take it at all hours and times, when requisite. Thousands of persons testify to its marvellous good effects and wonderful cures, while medical men extol its virtues most extensively, using it in great quantities in the following diseases:

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EARL RUSSELL has graciously favoured **J. T. DAVENPORT** with the following:—Extract of a despatch from **Mr. WEBB, H.B.M.'s Consul at Manila**, dated September 17, 1864:—"The remedy most efficacious in its effects (in Epidemic Cholera) has been found to be Chlorodyne, and with a small quantity given to me by **Dr. Burke** I have saved several lives."

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The immense demand enables the Proprietors to reduce the price. It is now sold in bottles 1s. 1½d., 2s. 9d., and 4s. 6d., containing double quantity.

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MRS ALLEN'S
Never Fails to
RESTORE GRAY or FADING HAIR to
its youthful colour and beauty.
It will cause Hair to grow on Bald spots.
It will promote luxuriant growth.
FALLING HAIR is immediately checked.
DULL Hair thickened.
BALDNESS prevented.
In large Bottles, price Six Shillings.
Sold by most Chemists and Perfumers.
Depot, 306, High Holborn,
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NOTHING IMPOSSIBLE.

AQUA AMARELLA restores the human hair to its pristine hue, no matter at what age. **JNO. GOSNELL & CO.** have at length, with the aid of one of the most eminent chemists, succeeded in perfecting this wonderful liquid. It is now offered to the public in a more concentrated form, and at a lower price. Sold in bottles, 3s. each; also 5s., 7s. 6d., and 15s. each, including brush.—Red Bull Wharf, Angel Passage, 93, Upper Thames Street, London, E.C. Single bottles forwarded on receipt of postage stamps or Post Office Order.

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APPROVED FAMILY REQUISITES.

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The above preparations are sold by all respectable Chemists, and by the Proprietor **THOMAS KEATING, 79, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD, E.C.**

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Have for more than 30 years proved their value in Diseases of the Head, Chest, Liver, Kidneys, and Digestive Organs: they are a direct Purifier of the Blood, and in all Skin Complaints one of the best Medicines known.

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KID or Memel can be made beautifully black by using the Palace Kid Restorer; 2d. & 4d. box; 1s., 1s. 6d., and 2s. canister.

Try McLellan's Scotch Dubbin.
Machine needles, Thomas' and Singer's, 1s., How's, 1s. 2d. per doz.; superior white silk, 2s. 6d. per oz.; Porpoise laces, 6d. per pair; st. Eng. butt ends; cin. Eug. butts, 1s. 5d. per lb.; 34 lbs. p. st. Foreign half butts, 1s. 4d. per lb.; prime Fr. calf, 3s. per lb.; prime calf kids, 52s. per doz.; stout and large mock kids, 42s. per dozen.

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PICTURE FRAMES of every description, at the lowest prices. Engravings and Coloured Sporting Subjects in Great Variety. Prints, 30 x 24, 8s. per doz. Maple and Gilt Mouldings to the Trade and for Exportation.

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Gives instant relief in Headache, Sea or Bilious Sickness, and quickly cures the worst form of Eruptive or Skin Complaints. The various diseases arising from Constipation, the Liver, or Blood Impurities, Inoculation, Breathing Air infested with Fevers, Measles, or Small Pox, ARE CURED BY ITS USE.

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FINELY PREPARED VEGETABLE CHARCOAL, by its action in absorbing impure gases in the stomach and bowels, is found to afford speedy relief in cases of impure breath, acidity, gout, indigestion, dyspepsia, heartburn, worms, &c.

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2. The repairs of the Boundaries of Churchyard.
3. A New Organ.
4. Infant School-room.
5. Ragged School and Mission Church.

By means of this Fund, works are continuously being carried on. The greater portion can be completed this year if the money is forthcoming. ONE THOUSAND POUNDS, in addition to all in hand or promised, required this year to meet demands of contractors.

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The annual income exceeds £201,000

The Assurance Fund safely invested is 1,446,000

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The New Policies in the last year were 466, assuring 271,440

The Bonus added to Policies at the last division was 275,070

The total claims by death paid amount to 1,962,620

The following are among the distinctive features of the society:

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Endowment Assurances may be effected, without profits, by which the sum assured becomes payable on the attainment of a specified age, or at death, whichever event shall first happen.

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The next Division of Profits will take place in January, 1867, and persons who effect new policies before the end of June next will be entitled at the division to one year's additional share of profits over later entrants.

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